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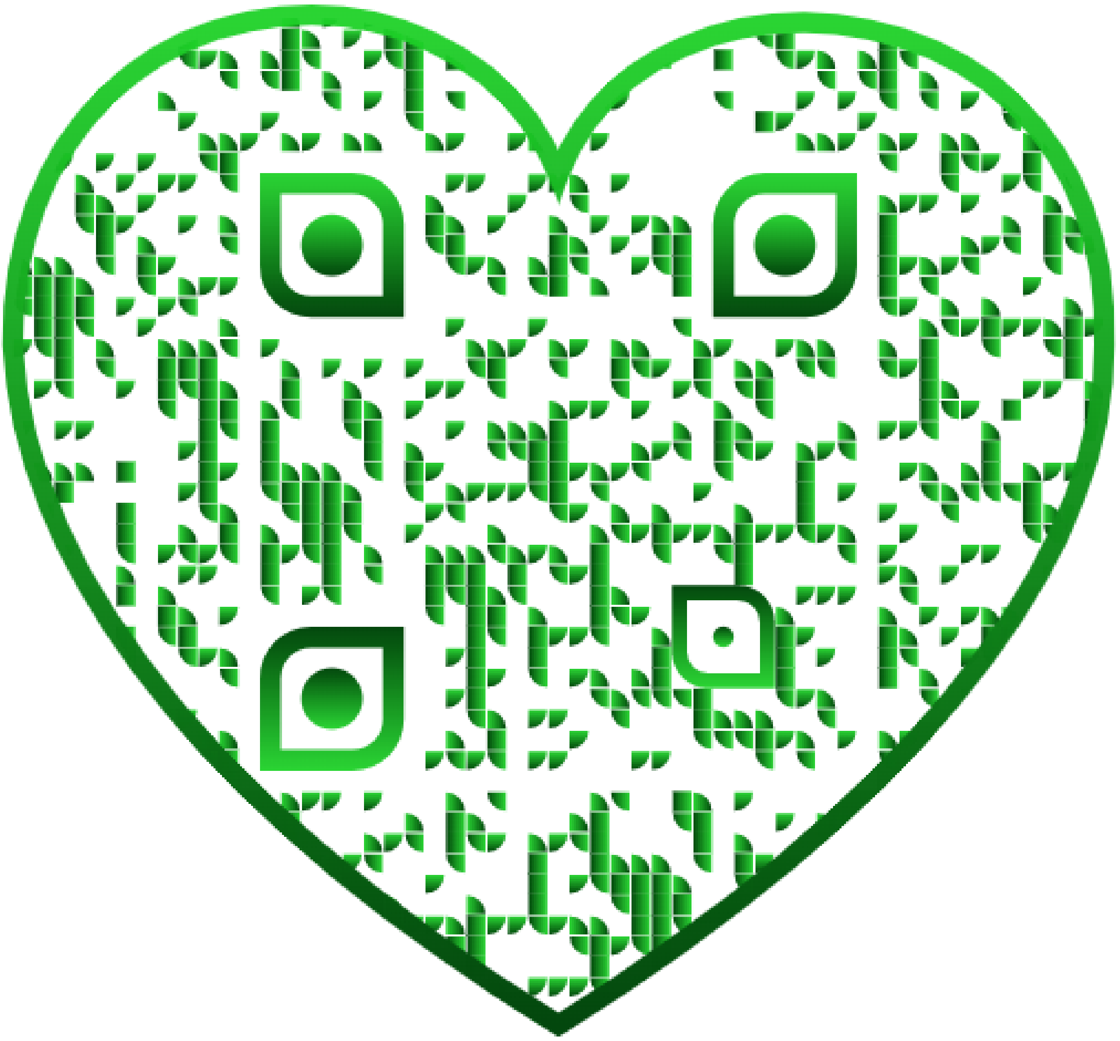

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Welcome

No, we haven't gone completely potty: we aren't suggesting that the blue-collar hero Ford Capri is a direct rival to the blue-blooded Aston Martin Vantage. However, if you have dreamed of owning arguably Britain's greatest muscle car, but are operating on a budget that's more lemonade than Champagne, we reckon that the Blue Oval's car you always promised yourself is well worth a look, particularly in X-Pack form. And, says confirmed Ford fan Paul Hardiman from p76, if you are willing to overlook the difference that a couple of hand-assembled cylinders and a whole herd of the finest cattle hides make, these two iconic classics have more in common than you might imagine.

As I write, I'm fresh back from a very welcome spot of winter warmth at the sun-soaked – and truly remarkable for an inaugural edition – Royal Bahrain Concours (see p8), and thoughts have now turned to the fast-approaching festive season. Of course, I struggle to think of any Christmas gift that could be more welcome than a subscription to *Classic & Sports Car* (turn to p140 to see our latest offers), or perhaps a copy of our brilliant new *1970s Legends* special edition (order via magsdirect.co.uk/classic-sports-car-presents/), but if you're struggling for present ideas, starting from p42 each member of the *C&SC* team has shared an item from their own lists before sending them off to Santa to give you a bit of inspiration for the petrolhead in your life. All that's left for me to do is wish all our readers a Merry Christmas and a classic New Year.

ALASTAIR CLEMENTS
Editor in chief, *Classic & Sports Car*

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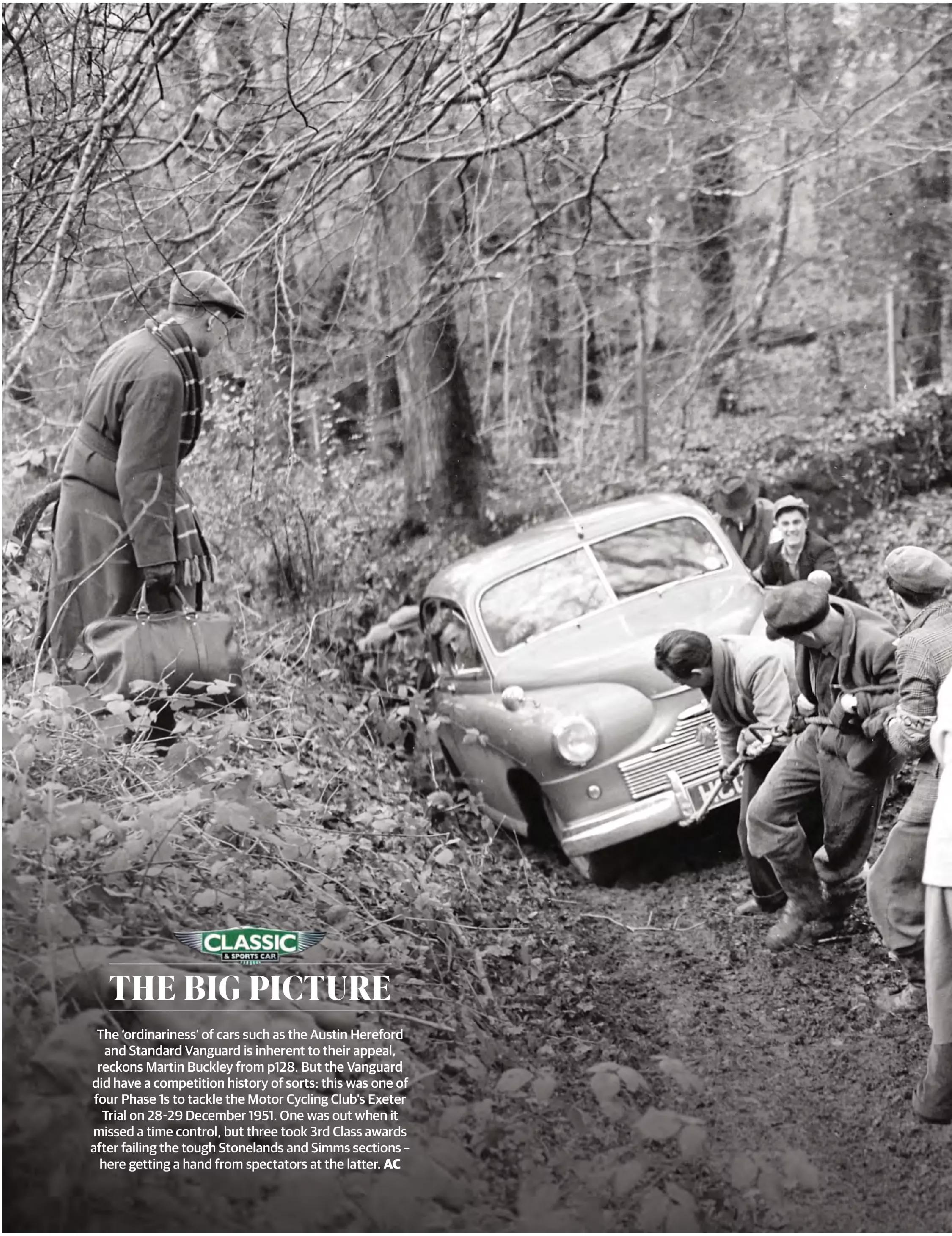


THE BIG PICTURE

The 'ordinariness' of cars such as the Austin Hereford and Standard Vanguard is inherent to their appeal, reckons Martin Buckley from p128. But the Vanguard did have a competition history of sorts: this was one of four Phase 1s to tackle the Motor Cycling Club's Exeter Trial on 28-29 December 1951. One was out when it missed a time control, but three took 3rd Class awards after failing the tough Stonelands and Simms sections – here getting a hand from spectators at the latter. **AC**

GETTY

GLAMOUR IN THE GULF

The first Royal Bahrain Concours made a strong case for itself as a new must-visit fixture on the classic calendar

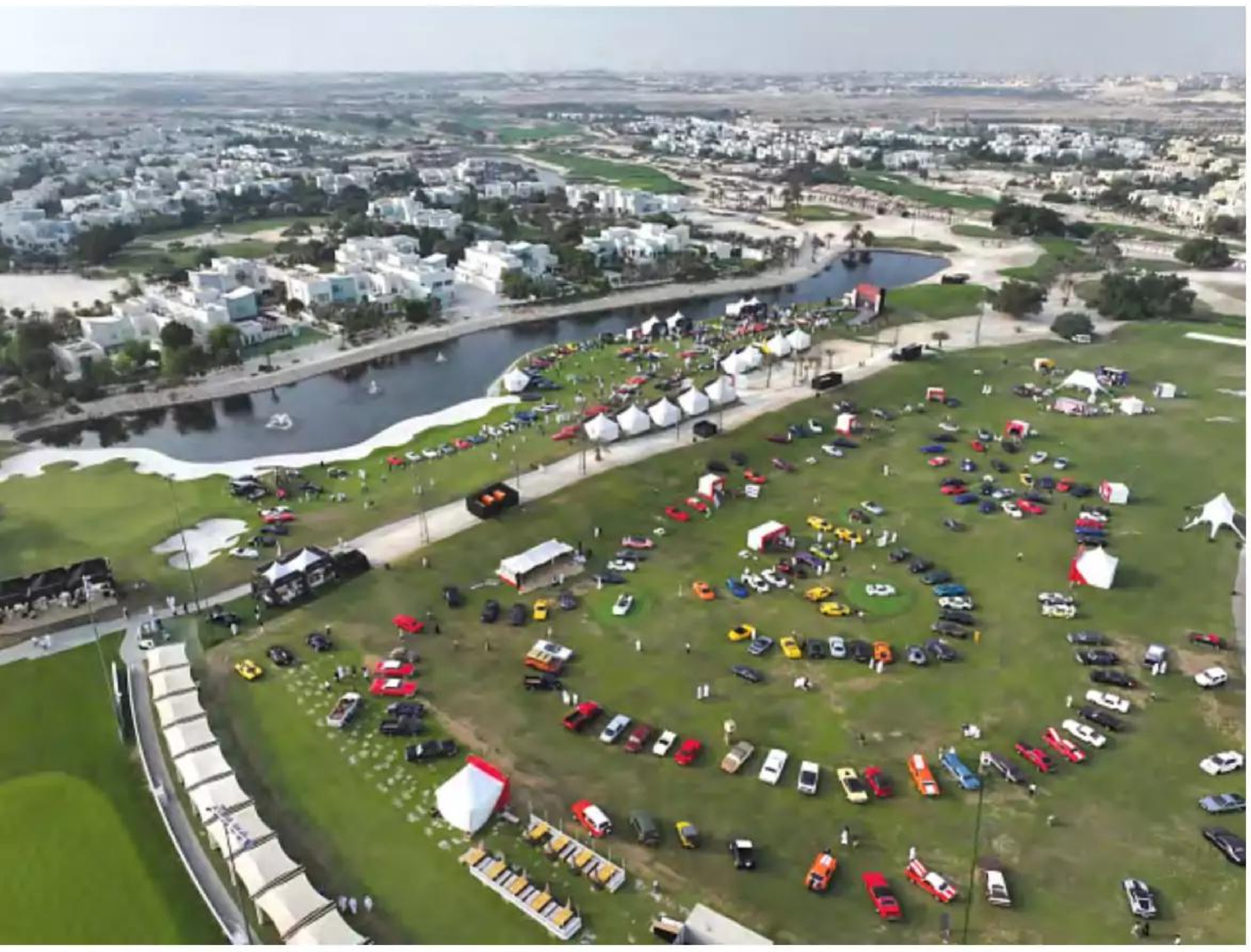
WORDS **ALASTAIR CLEMENTS** PHOTOGRAPHY **TIM SCOTT/ONE SPACE STUDIO**

Valentino Balboni drives winning Miura on to the stage. Right: E-type was shipped from the UK

Having extended its reach into mainland Europe in 2024 with the Concours of Elegance Germany on the shores of Lake Tegernsee, Thorough Events, the organiser of the London Concours and the Concours of Elegance at Hampton Court, made a triumphant Middle Eastern debut with the inaugural Royal Bahrain Concours, held on 7-8 November. Created at the instigation of the Crown Prince and Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Bahrain, Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, a keen car collector and regular exhibitor at Hampton Court Palace, this was a remarkable – and, bearing in mind the growing interest in classics in this part of the world, logical – extension to the portfolio.

It was a seamless transition, with the glamour and the serene atmosphere of the established European events transposed to the spectacular waterside venue provided by the 18th fairway of the Royal Bahrain Golf Club in Riffa Views – giving overtones of the world's most famous annual concours in Pebble Beach, on the Monterey Peninsula. Overseas entrants were bowled over by the Bahraini hospitality, but perhaps the greatest draw of the event was the way the flavour of the 60-plus concours competitors – which ranged from a 1913 Clément-Bayard T to a 2025 Koenigsegg Jesko Attack – was uniquely biased towards the tastes of the mainly local exhibitors. "It's 80% Middle Eastern content," confirmed co-curator Flavian Marçais. "We have had so much help from local collectors, we could pretty much take our pick. The local members

Keen enthusiast and patron Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa



Glorious prototype Porsche GT1 road car

Left-right: Simon Kidston's glorious, 380,000km SL; Nabeel Nooruddin's Countach

"In Europe, finding more modern hypercars to show is tricky; here that is flipped because these cars are their passion"

of the committee were key. In Europe, finding the pre-1940 cars is easy and the modern stuff is more tricky, but here that is totally flipped because these cars are their passion." Primarily that meant a remarkable number of limited-run hypercars, from a super-rare 1996 Porsche 911 (993) GT1 *Strassenversion* prototype to an Aston Martin Valkyrie, but also a healthy turnout of rare and interesting off-road vehicles.

Ahead of the two-day concours, a number of entrants took part in a track day on the Bahrain International Circuit before a night run through Manama. Back at the golf club, 20 minutes south of the capital, the nine class winners and overall honours were decided, as at the event's British equivalent, by fellow entrants rather than a Panama-hatted judging committee.

Fresh from an outstanding restoration by Cremonini Classic and Top Motors Salvioli, the superb 1972 Lamborghini Miura SV of local enthusiast Dr Khalid Abdulrahim took a popular and richly deserving Best of Show. Ordered new in 1971 through the Iranian Embassy in Rome for Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, the final Shah of Iran, chassis 4870 is one of only 147 SVs produced and looked spectacular in its original Bleu Ischia Metallizzato with white leather trim as it was proudly driven on to the podium by original Lamborghini factory test driver Valentino Balboni.

Among the individual classes, the Pre-1940 category was won by Arch Saad Mohammad Awad Binladen of Saudi Arabia for his 1937 Rolls-Royce Phantom III. The elegant, 7.3-litre V12-powered Phantom pipped the event patron's own 1933 Invicta S-type 'Low Chassis', with handsome and unusual Corsica Drophead Coupé coachwork, for class honours.

Saudi Arabian Adel Rajab's 1988 Lamborghini LM002 pick-up won in European Classics (see p12), while Swiss entrant Dr Jörg Wolle carried off the trophy for British Classics with his immaculate 1988 Aston Martin V8 Vantage Volante, one of just 22 cars built to discreet 'Prince of Wales' specification. Later uprated to 7 litres, it has recently been returned from blue to the signature PoW combination of Balmoral Green over tan leather by renowned Aston specialist RS Williams, whose managing director, Neil Thompson, was on hand to drive chassis 15746 up to collect its award.

Pre-1940 class-winning Rolls-Royce Phantom III with India-sourced 1934 Packard

Left-right: superb 'Prince of Wales' Aston Vantage; Adel Rajab's Saudi-based F40

Aston, McLaren, Ferrari, AMG and GMA hypercars

Malones' Sports & Race Classics class-winning Ferrari 250 in its natural habitat on Bahrain circuit

Fellow Swiss-based collector Fritz Burkard took American Classics with his wild 1955 Lincoln Indianapolis (see panel, right), before another overseas ownership pairing, Michael and Barbara Malone of the USA, secured the Sports & Race Classics award for their 1959 Ferrari 250 Testa Rossa, which they had enthusiastically exercised on the circuit the day before the concours. Chassis 0606 began life in 1956 as a 290MM, before being rebodied by Scaglietti and uprated to full 3-litre V12 TR specification to be campaigned first by Scuderia Ferrari and later Equipe Nationale Belge.

The remaining class wins all went to Gulf Cooperation Council nations, with the Crown Prince's 2006 Pagani Zonda F Clubsport, one of only 25 coupés produced, securing the Modern Classics category. The remarkable 'Flat Tops' group, celebrating limited-run windscreen-less speedsters, was topped by Kuwaiti Dr Adel Esmat Quttainah's super-rare 2009 Mercedes-Benz SLR Stirling Moss, a tribute to the 1955 Mille Miglia-winning 300SLR. Meanwhile, the Supercars and Hypercars victories were landed by Saudi Arabian enthusiasts: Abdullah Alibrahim's very low-mileage 2006 Porsche Carrera GT and HRH Abdulaziz Bin Turki Al Faisal Al Saud's 2025 Mercedes-AMG One respectively.

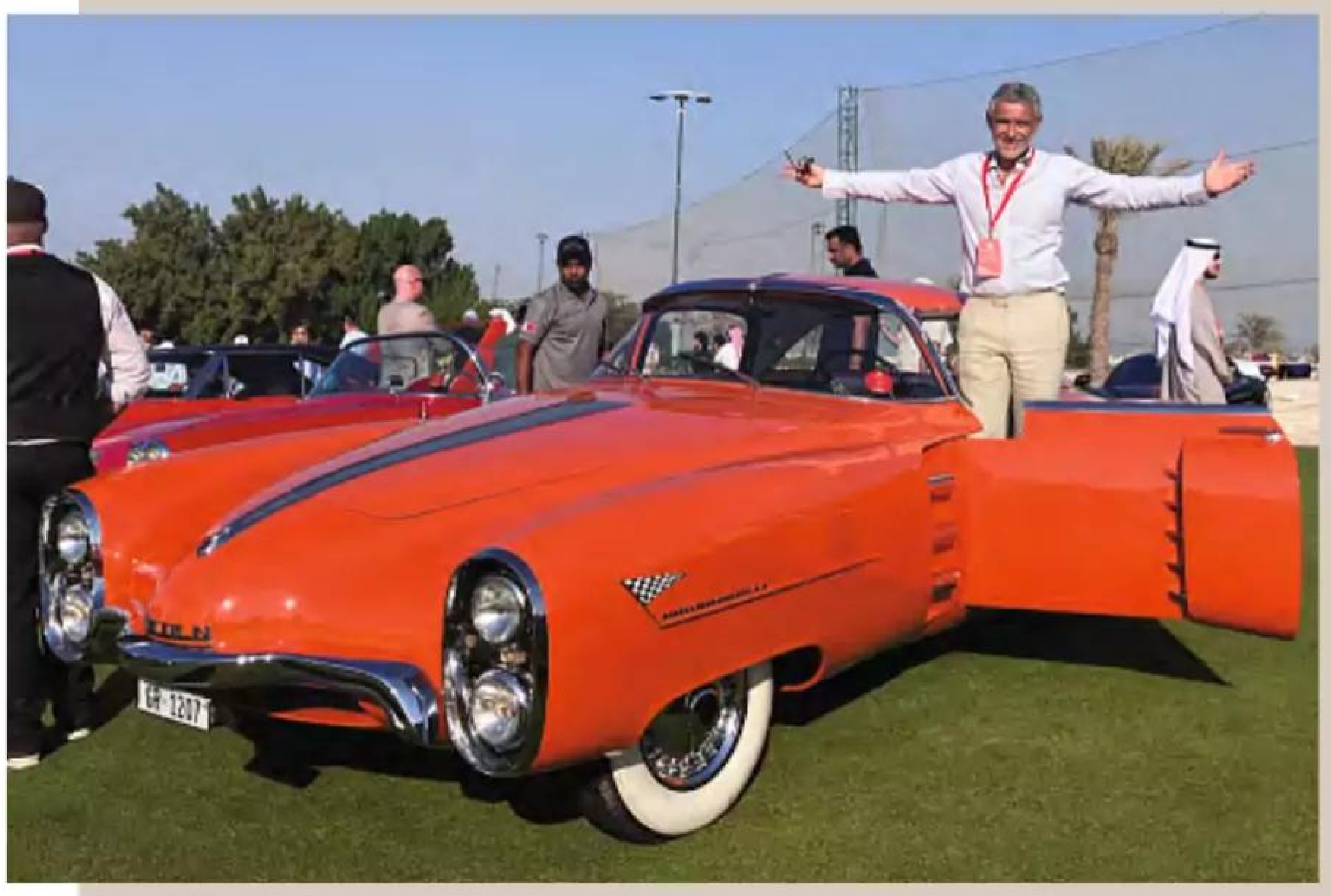
Away from the main categories, the Crown Prince Award was presented by the event's patron in person to HRH Prince Faisal A Al Faisal from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for his extemely rare 2008 Ferrari Zagato Nibbio, one of just six examples that were crafted by Carrozzeria Zagato, based on the 599GTB Fiorano.

There was a popular winner of the Steering Committee Award in Gautam Hari Singhania for his fabulous 1930 Cord L-29 Roadster. Airfreighted over from Mumbai, India, along with his 1934 Packard after missing the shipping deadline for the event, the Navajo Red Cord was previously part of the Jack Dunning Collection and features advanced front-wheel drive for its 298cu in straight-eight engine.

Gautam Hari Singhania's front-wheel-drive Cord with period modified headlights wowed all

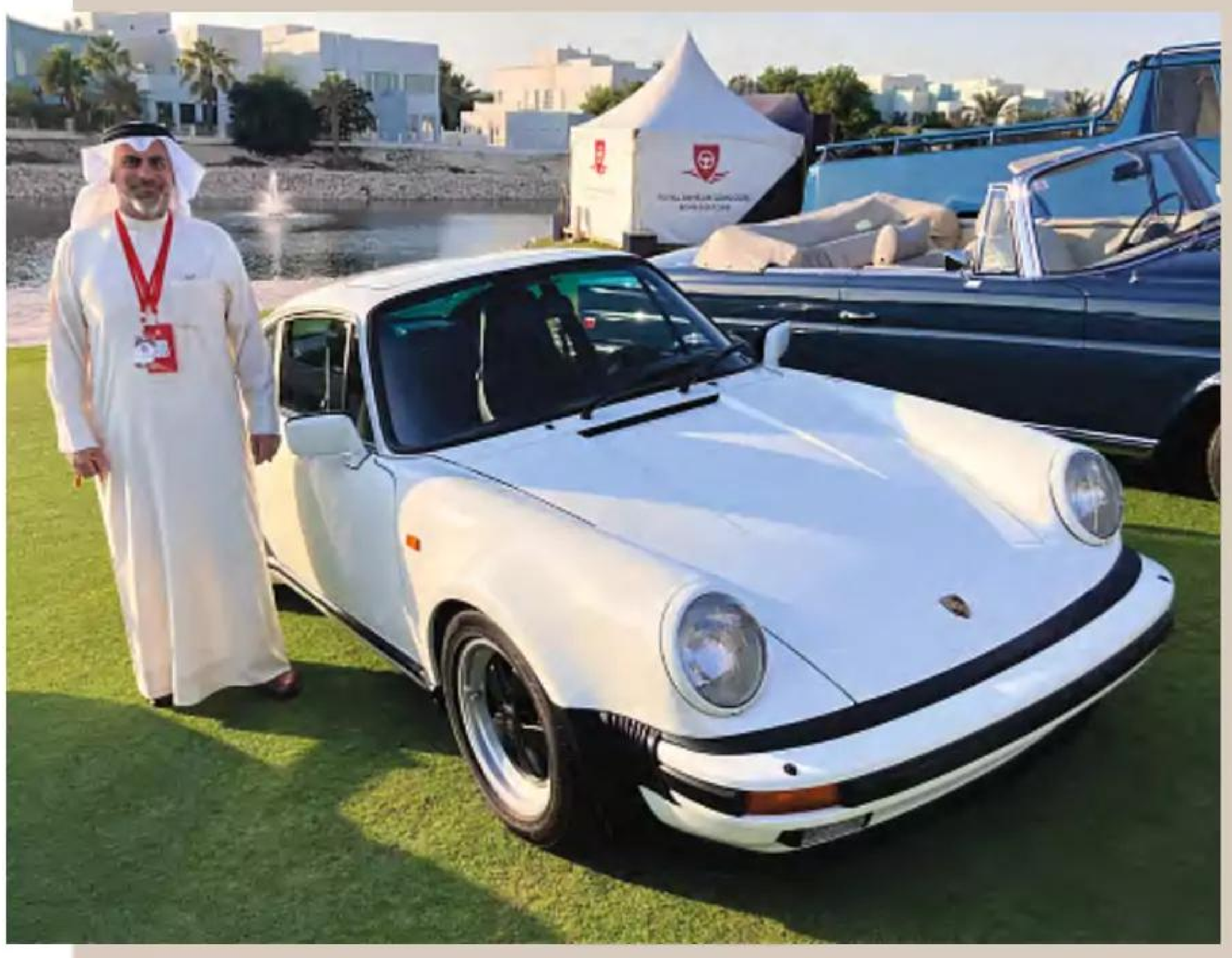
Left-right: 'Flat Tops' winning McMerc SLR Stirling Moss; AMG One was top hypercar

C&SC'S BAHRAIN CONCOURS STARS



1955 LINCOLN INDIANAPOLIS

"Three days ago I was scraping the ice off the windscreen," laughed Swiss collector Fritz Burkard, "but here, with all that glass, it's like a sauna on wheels!" A great believer in using his classic cars, Fritz took part in the track day on the Bahrain International Circuit the day before the concours in this spectacular one-off concept machine designed by Carrozzeria Boano. "It's horrible to drive," he admitted. "It's not really built for that because it's a show car, but taking it on the track was great and I drove it through the town late last night. It's fun to see people's faces, and why would I use a limousine if I can use this? All of these machines are beautiful to look at, but if you don't drive your cars you lose 70-80% of the fun. Drive it, use it and have fun with it – that's the best way to enjoy a car."



1984 PORSCHE 911 CARRERA 3.2 WTL

Local enthusiast Shaikh Hamad Bin Rashid Al-Khalifa's rare, Grand Prix White 911 Werks Turbo Look – also known as the M491 package – was one for the serious Porsche geeks. "I've had it for 12 years," he explained. "I wanted a wide-body 911 specified from new without a wing, and I was looking for a whole year before I found one. Sadly, that car had sold on the day I called up about it – but then, amazingly, I found this car the very same day. It was in The Netherlands and had already been restored by Porsche Classic from the ground up – it was like hitting the jackpot! My uncle had a 930 when I was a child and I remember looking at it every day – I guess that's where the longing came from, but I always preferred the looks without the 'whale tail'. I've just been enjoying it ever since."

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Gorgeous original Cobra was stewards' choice. Below: Best Modified Ford F-1

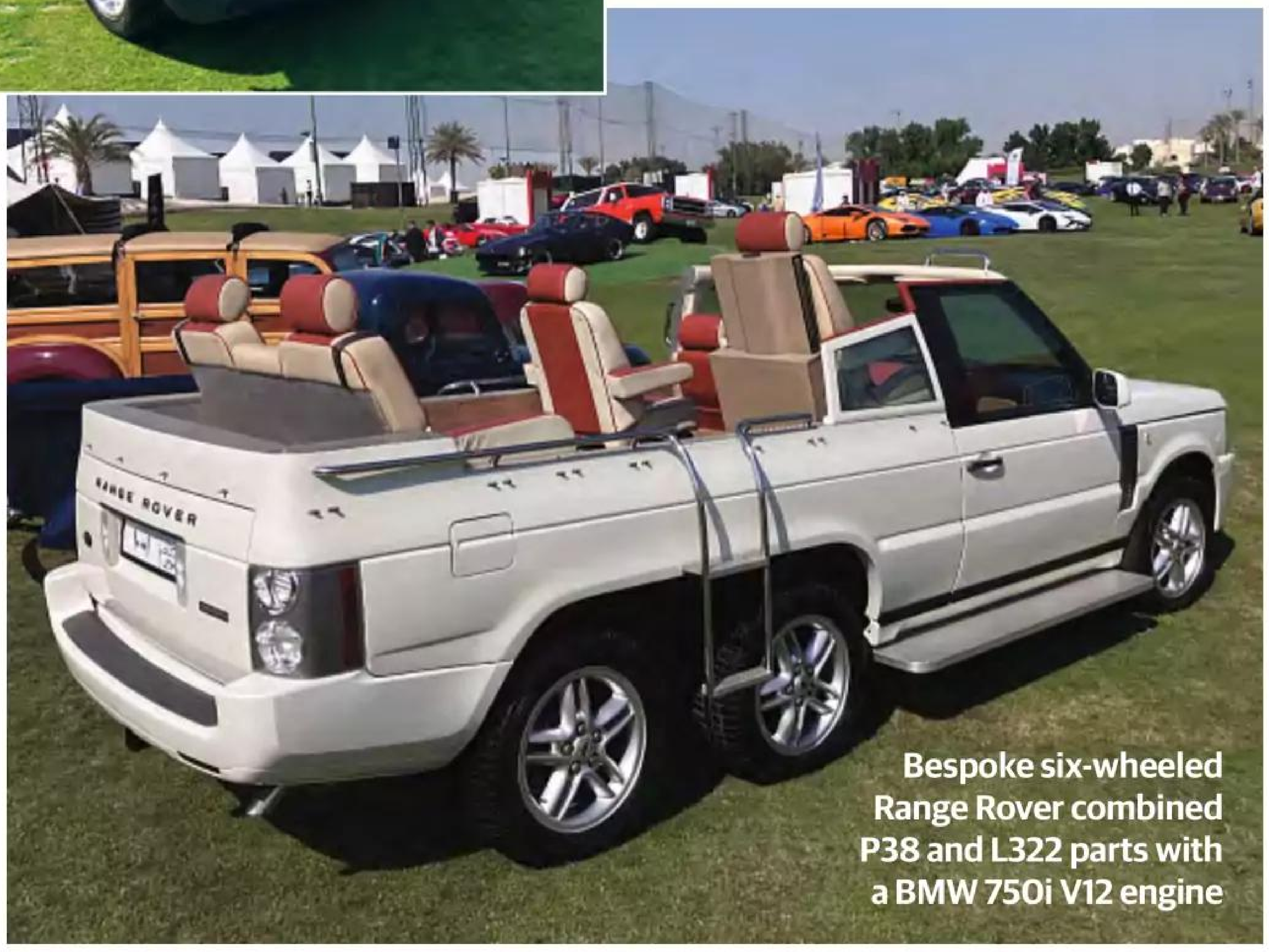
Finally, the AirX Award, chosen by the event's stewards, was given to Malcolm and Christina Welford of the USA for their wonderfully original 1963 Shelby Cobra. CSX 2055 is among the earliest Cobras built, delivered in November 1962 to European Cars Inc, and retains many of the unique details of these initial models – although not its 260cu in engine, which has been replaced by a later 289.

A small temporary village of exhibitors separated the main concours classes from the club displays, which brought hundreds of additional vehicles scattered across the Royal Bahrain Golf Club's driving range to create a separate show by itself. The Porsche Owners' Club was judged to have put on the finest club display, but there were also strong selections from the Bahrain Motor Club, Lamborghini Club Bahrain, Aston Martin Owners Bahrain, the new Royal Bahrain Concours Car Club and the Mobilis Car Club.

This area played host to a trio of curated Feature Classes, too, that included a number of vehicles you might not see at a traditional concours, again reflecting the focus of collectors in this part of the world. Top honours in the Restomod & Modified trophy went to a tastefully hot-rodded 1951 Ford F-1, while a remarkably high-end 30 Under 30 group – which even included a 2003 Lamborghini Murciélago LP580 and a Mercedes-Benz SLR McLaren – was won by a comparatively attainable Porsche 911SC. But the most intriguing selection was reserved for the 4x4 Class, which ranged from a mint 1978 Suzuki LJ80 Jimny to Jeddah-based classic dealer Capt Talal Bin Mansi's 1967 Dodge Power Wagon.

The class winner, however, was Sheikh Ahmed Al Khalifa's remarkable, six-wheeled Range Rover. Designed for use in Falcon hunting, complete with nautical-style, chromed boarding ladders and a seat that rises for handlers to more easily catch their birds of prey, the arresting white Range Rover was one of two to feature V12 power from the BMW 750i and was originally built for the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia.

This was certainly not the first attempt to create a European-style concours in the Middle East, but was arguably the most successful yet – even if the turnout of more traditional classic fare could be improved. An excellent variety of cars was topped off by balmy weather and superb hospitality, and it was a measure of the success of this debut gathering that no one was discussing whether or not it would happen again, but instead enthusiastically debating the small improvements that could be implemented to make its return next year even better.



Bespoke six-wheeled Range Rover combined P38 and L322 parts with a BMW 750i V12 engine

1988 LAMBORGHINI LM002

Towering above the prevailing sports cars in the European Classics class, this unique LM002 was an event favourite. And legendary Sant'Agata test driver Valentino Balboni was on hand to be reunited with the bizarre pick-up take on the 'Rambo Lambo', originally built for Falcon hunting. "This was one of two or three different versions that Turin coachbuilder Salvatore Diomante produced," explained Valentino. "You either love or hate the LM002, but I did all of the development work and it was a pleasure. It was interesting because this was my first time moving from a very low car to a very high one. The original Cheetah was designed for the military, but when Lamborghini bought the rights we had to redevelop it because the long torsion bars broke when you went off-road, so we redesigned the suspension with coil springs. The first prototype was rear-engined, but over the sand dunes during testing it was unstable, so we moved the V12 engine to the front."

1939 FORD V8 4x4 WOODIE

Kuwaiti enthusiast Haidar Al Roomi's Ford woodie is not quite what it first appears. Although it looks like an authentic 1939 V8, complete with evocative 'Mormon-Herringbone All Wheel Drive' badges, it is in fact a modern reinterpretation with a flip-forward glassfibre front clip – and doesn't even have a Ford engine! "I bought it in the USA two years ago," explained Haider. "It's a restomod, or really a replica – it has a Chevy 350cu in V8, an automatic transmission and power-assisted steering. I use it a lot back home in Kuwait, where I have a collection of cars – I have also brought along a custom 1940 Ford F-1 pick-up with a Deluxe front end and a Mustang 302cu in V8 engine, and a very original 1959 Ford Skyliner."

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TVR Car Club's Speed 12 was a star of the 1997 London Motor Show

NEW TRICKS FOR THE NEC

The NEC Classic Motor Show was nearly bursting with visitors from 7-9 November, as a youthful turn demonstrated that the traditional curtain-closer of Britain's classic car year has plenty of life left in it, so long as it continues to adapt to the next generation of audiences.

This year's theme, The Best of Both Worlds, was interpreted very differently across a crowded NEC, with 72,738 in attendance over the weekend. One tenuous, tongue-in-cheek yet spectacular stab at the theme was that of the Transit Van Club, which displayed the recently rebuilt 1971 Supervan alongside a 1984 Supervan 2 replica and the original '94 Supervan 3, which still belongs to Ford Motor Company.

The AC Owners' Club suggested that its patinated yet mechanically renewed 1962 Greyhound met the brief, while Lotus Grand Tourers produced a stand with graphic elements that argued the Elite, Éclat, Excel and Esprit all offered modern performance and rust resistance while providing classic looks, sensations and prices – but with no mention of reliability.

Some clubs focused on the modern classics within their stables to match the theme, with the MG Car Club even creating a separate stand for 'ZED25' – celebrating the introduction of the ZR, ZS and ZT in 2001 – echoing a more general trend towards younger metal at the show.

Clockwise from top left: newly restored Ford Supervan; patinated AC Greyhound; unearthed 1990s MG PR3 prototype; unique Jensen C-V8 coupé returns to the NEC

Huge crowds thronged among modern classics of a new generation

Most refreshingly, that included groups such as the Young Retro Motor Club, an entirely social media-based group funded solely by the sale of its inspired stickers. It was reassuring proof that young classic owners could organise a stand at an event as traditional – and relatively expensive – as the annual Birmingham extravaganza without the support of a larger, more well-established club. That it brought along an Audi quattro, Suzuki Ignis and Ford Escort Mk5 demonstrated the tastes of the coming generation of enthusiasts.

The Jensen Owners' Club was among those exhibitors able to completely ignore the prevailing show theme, thanks to an ace in its pack, with Paul Bridges bringing the only fixed-head coupé version of the S-V8 produced. It was last seen at the 1998 NEC British Motor Show as an S-V8 prototype in convertible form. In 2000, the car was modified by Jensen into a C-V8, but it was never developed into road-legal condition. Owned by Paul for the past 15 years, a long restoration that intends to finally bring it to the road is currently scheduled to finish in early 2026.

Historic Marathon Rally Group's 1970 WCR tribute reunited four Ford Escorts

The nearby TVR Car Club won the battle for the biggest crowd of punters in Hall 1, however, owing to its bright-purple Speed 12 prototype (originally Project 7/12) that was the star of the 1997

London Motor Show. Owner Clive Reed acquired the car around a decade ago, and he is now on a mission to get it back on the road. "It was the second of three Speed 12s," he explains. "The first was built in 1996 and was basically a plaster-and-wood mock-up with blacked-out windows. This one came along in '97 with a proper chassis. It was registered in April '98 and I have the V5C for it – so all I need is for it to pass an MoT test – but I've got some work to do to get it there." Apparently this Speed 12's engine and transmission were transplanted into the subsequent Cerbera Speed 12, so Clive began developing the idea of creating a 'new' engine with a Jaguar V12 block and TVR Speed Six cylinder heads. However, with no brakes, suspension or electronic systems, the project is far from finished. "But how do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time," he says.

The British Motor Museum also returned to the event, making its first official showing for a decade with a display featuring the MG PR3 prototype. On loan from MG Motor and recently benefitting from a gentle restoration after spending many years decaying at Longbridge, the MGF progenitor is soon to make its debut appearance at the Gaydon museum.

The annual Pride of Ownership competition was back in its usual form – this year visitors voted to crown David Wootton and his 2004 Vauxhall Astra GSi – as well as a Best of the Best prize celebrating the competition's 10th birthday. Following a public vote before the show started, Spring Pride of Ownership 2024 title-holder Colin Fidler's 1965 Austin A35 was revealed as the ultimate winner.

There was still a strong sense of continuity for veterans of the NEC Classic Motor Show, and the traditional, bechromed stars of past years were still found space – even if they were sandwiched between a whole club of Audi 80 Cabriolet enthusiasts on one side and YouTubers on the other. It was hardly a revolution in Birmingham, but the gradual changing of the guard felt gratefully embraced in a manner unlike previous years – and it was all the better for it.

Volvo Owners' Club displayed the only P1900 thought to be in the UK

Left-right: rare De Tomaso Guarà; Jaguar V12-engined Aston DB7 Vantage prototype

Left-right: Talbot-Matra Rancho; early Land-Rover with Swedish Grip-Kaross body

Left-right: Dimma Turbo Technics Peugeot 205; Porsche-powered Tempo Matador

From top: Vauxhall Astra GSi won Pride of Ownership; Best of the Best trophy went to freshly restored '65 Austin A35

C&SC'S CLASSIC MOTOR SHOW FAVOURITES

AUTO UNION 1000SP

Justus Van Der Spuy's 1961 1000SP Coupé was, for me, one of the prettiest cars at the NEC this year. Manufactured by Karosserie Baur for Auto Union between 1958 and 1965, the diminutive 1000SP's pronounced rear wings and bullet-shaped tail-lights were inspired by the Ford Thunderbird, and it's powered by DKW's 981cc, 54bhp two-stroke triple. In his 18 months of ownership, Justus has already been on tours to Germany and Austria with the car. **SH**

NISSAN MICRA K10

There was no greater demonstration of how times have changed at the NEC than this Nissan K10 Micra. Not long ago this supermini would have gone unnoticed, but in Birmingham it was drawing crowds and photos as it stuck out into one of Hall 4's thoroughfares on Rub-A-Dub-Rub's stand. The robust K10 and K11 Micras are now darlings of amateur motorsport and this one featured a Honda D-series motor that has more than doubled the car's original output. **CC**

LOTUS SIX

This Lotus kick-started British Formula One driver Alan Stacey's motorsport career. Having built it in 1954, his successful outings led to a Lotus Eleven that he raced at Le Mans in 1957. Stacey caught the eye of Colin Chapman and joined Team Lotus in '58. His life and promising racing career were cut short following a crash at Spa-Francorchamps in 1960, after a bird struck his helmet. 555 DEV is now owned by Stacey's nephew, who also shares his name. **RS**

LONDON TO BRIGHTON
START
2025
RM Sotheby's
Veteran Car Run
YG 46
112
109
P.26

1902 Delahaye leads along Constitution Hill. Right: newbies Alex Brundle and Charlotte Vowden in opening ceremony

ROYAL AUTOMOBILE CLUB

Fresh blood and new fuels for Veteran Car Run

Racing driver Alex Brundle and journalist Charlotte Vowden kicked off the London to Brighton Veteran Car Run on 2 November by tearing up the red flag on the startline in Hyde Park. This gesture honours the Emancipation Run of 1896, which celebrated the introduction of the Locomotives on Highways Act and the abolition of the British 4mph speed limit.

The pair's 1899 Wolseley 3.5hp Voiturette (*C&SC*, November '25) is already an established Brighton Run regular, having made the 60-mile trip to Madeira Drive on Brighton's seafront 39 times previously, but OWL 707 was picked to be the first car to leave Hyde Park in 2025 to mark the 1000 Miles Trial of 1900. The Wolseley, which belongs to the British Motor Museum, is one of two surviving entrants of the original 22-day round trip from London to Edinburgh.

The Wolseley was one of 384 vehicles to take part, with participants travelling from across the world, including 26 from the USA. Of that total, 340 made it to the Brighton finish before the 4:30pm cut-off. The first across the line was the Renaux tricycle that won the 1900 Paris to St Malo road race. Mercedes brought a 1901 Benz Spider and a 1904 Mercedes-Simplex, but the latter failed to start. The Salvesen steam car was a crowd favourite: the 132-year-old's hard-working stoker shovelled eCoal (made from olives, coffee and molasses) into the furnace. To boost awareness of sustainable fuels, several entrants were powered by Sustain biofuel.

"Shamefully, I didn't know much about the event, but I've completely fallen in love with it," said Brundle. "Being in one of the older cars was a challenge, which only added to the fun."

ROYAL AUTOMOBILE CLUB

PALL MALL EXTRAVAGANZA HAILS VETERANS

Following its 2024 debut, the St James's Motoring Spectacle returned to Pall Mall in Westminster, London, on 1 November. The free-to-attend event hosted by the Royal Automobile Club was not only a warm-up for Sunday's London to Brighton Veteran Car Run, but also a showcase of new cars and motorsport stars, from a Ferrari Daytona SP3 to Tom Ingram's BTCC-winning Hyundai i30N. The event incorporated the St James's Concours, a showcase of 70 veteran vehicles.

Concours winners included a 1901 De Dion-Bouton, 1900 Clement-Panhard and 1904 Napier, but Tim Summers' restored 1901 Georges Richard (above, centre) won overall. "The coachwork still looks absolutely superb and, I dare say, will do so for the next 100 years," remarked head judge Philip Oldman. Meanwhile, the best-dressed gong went to the crew of a 1902 MMC.

Anniversary displays included a 75 years of Formula One exhibition – which featured the British Grand Prix trophy – plus 50th-birthday celebrations for the Lotus Esprit and Volkswagen Polo.

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BAVARIA'S BEST ON SHOW
More than 500 vehicles were on display at NürnbergMesse, Germany, for the ninth Retro Classics Bavaria show from 7-9 November. Homegrown models were the stars, including a set of Audi quattro rally cars, plus a line-up of Opel Manta Bs and Ascona Bs for their half century.

AUTOCAR'S SAFE-KEEPING
Autocar has found a new home for its archive. Print copies of the 130-year-old magazine will be stored at the British Motor Museum in Gaydon, UK. Some issues are missing; if you think you can help, contact archive@britishmotormuseum.co.uk

BUGATTI

BUGATTI SHUNTS TO PARIS
To mark Rétromobile's 50th anniversary, the huge French indoor show will transport the sole-surviving, Type 41-engined Bugatti Autorail (above) c300 miles from its home in Mulhouse to the Paris show, where it will be displayed from 28 January-1 February. See retromobile.com

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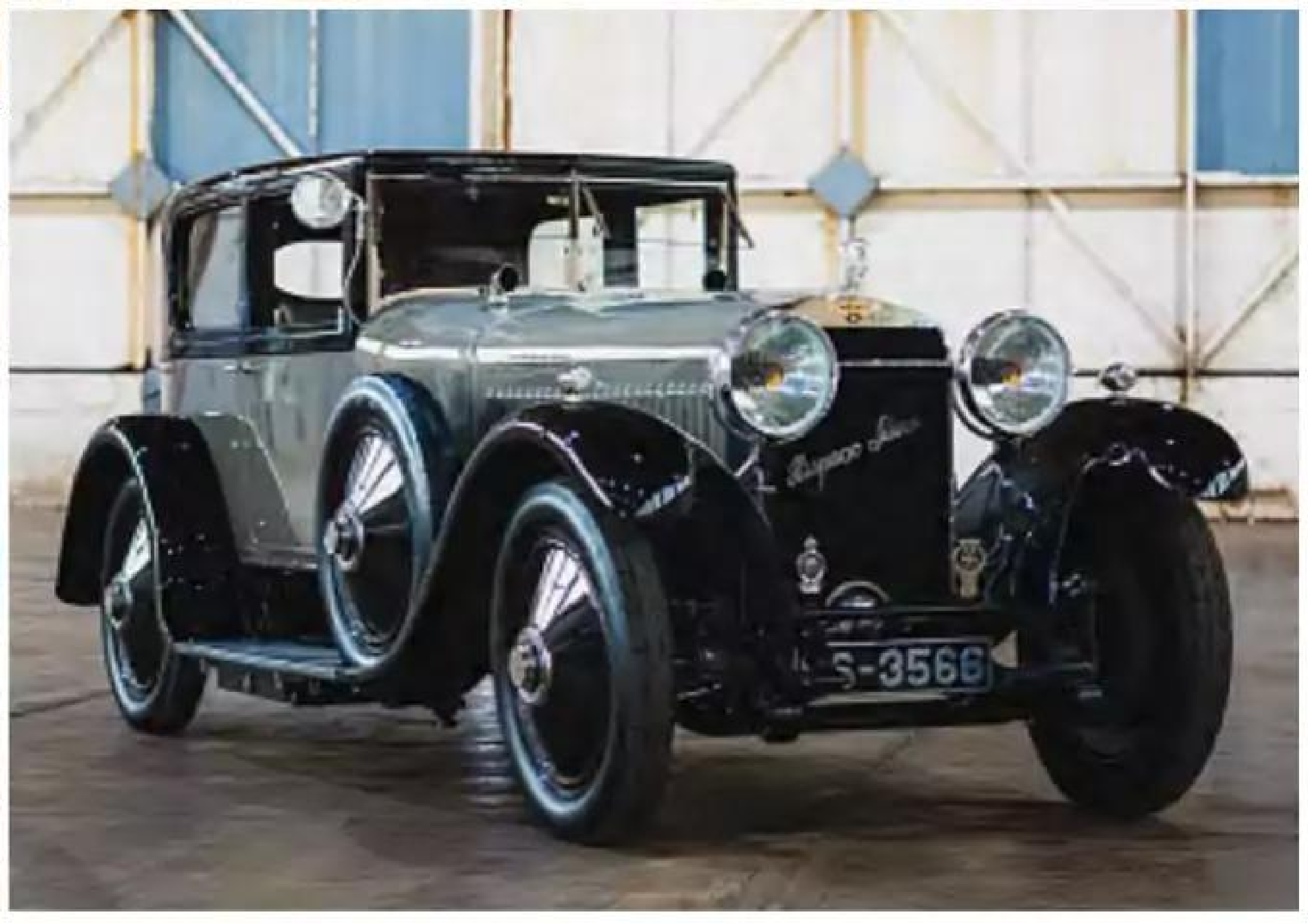

Clockwise from right: Duncan Wiltshire awards author Karl Ludvigsen; Young Achiever Sammy Ruff; stunning Hispano H6C; innovative Equipe Super Sprint series

Royal Automobile Club crowns its Historic winners

The leading lights and unsung heroes of Britain's classic industry were recognised at the annual Royal Automobile Club Historic Awards at its Pall Mall clubhouse, London, on 20 November.

The Restoration award went to Simon Kidston and Jonathan Wood Ltd for their work reviving the 1924 Hispano-Suiza H6C 'Boulogne' first owned by Simon's uncle, Glen Kidston. Sammy Ruff was presented the Young Achiever gong for her work as an upholsterer, going from a novice to a leading talent in the field in just five years.

The Competitive Event trophy went to the inaugural International McRae Rally Challenge, acknowledged for its star-studded guest list and exciting stage rallies, centred around Knockhill circuit. The exciting event plans to return only every three or five years. Equipe Super Sprint, meanwhile, was acknowledged as Innovation of the year for introducing a new, simplified format for historic motorsport that has focused on increased track time for participants.

The much updated and improved Salon Privé was named Motoring Spectacle winner in its 20th-anniversary year, while Dan Cogger got the nod for Outstanding Journalism and the British Motor Museum topped Museums & Collections thanks to recent initiatives such as its Lego Brick-Bank, STEM Career Days and Community Pantries. Julian Grimwade was posthumously honoured with the Personal Endeavour trophy for his advocacy of the historic movement, expressed through the Vintage Sports-Car Club, Bentley Drivers' Club and Brooklands Trust.

Finally, the prestigious Lifetime Achievement award was presented to legendary motorcycle racer and museum owner Sammy Miller.

A few weeks earlier, on 29 October, the club announced its 2025 Motoring Book of the Year, with respected historian Karl Ludvigsen landing the top trophy for his epic, three-volume work *Power Unleashed: Trailblazers who Energised Engines with Supercharging and Turbocharging*.

Performance wins in Belgium

InterClassics Brussels celebrated the ultimate symbols of power at the annual Belgian show, from 14-16 November, with special exhibitions on the history of the V12 engine and 75 years of Formula One (left). A record 29,472 visitors attended Brussels Expo for some 800 cars, many of which were for sale from a variety of dealers.

Honouring motorsport's foremost category were 13 F1 racers, from the 1950 Talbot-Lago T26C to a 2025 Kick Sauber C45 show car. Classic highlights included a 1959 Aston Martin DBR4, the fourth and final car built, which served as a works spare before being campaigned in private hands ever since, latterly in historic events. The ex-Derek Warwick 1989 Arrows A11-01 and ex-Jean Alesi 1998 Sauber C17-04 also featured.

The 19-strong V12 set spanned 110 years of the layout, from a 1916 Packard Twin Six and later Rolls-Royce Phantom III to modern hypercars. InterClassics reported great interest from younger crowds towards the likes of the Pagani Zonda R Lanzante, Mercedes-Benz CLK GTR (left) and Aston Martin Valkyrie, while more traditional fans eyed up a Ferrari 212 Inter Cabriolet, Lagonda V12 Le Mans car and rare R129 Mercedes-Benz SL Brabus 6.9.

TRANS AFRICA LAND ROVER

OVERLAND ADVENTURER
Martin Port's book on his Land-Rover SII, star of *Our classics*, is now available as a special-edition reprint. Three new chapters in *Trans Africa Land Rover* bring the story up to date, and the first 250 orders will get a signed A2 poster plotting Philip Kohler's expedition. See porterpress.co.uk

ESSEN SHOW REFOCUSED
Messe Essen, the venue itself, has taken over organisation of the Essen Motor Show (not to be confused with Techno Classica Essen) for November 2026. It has announced a hall reserved for 'youngtimer' cars, another for traditional classics and a trade area. See essen-motorshow.de

LA DOLCE VITA IN LA
Macchinissima hosted its third event since 2022 in Los Angeles' Arts District on 27 September, with 150 Italian classics on show. The main display celebrated Alfa Romeo's 115th birthday, with the new 33 Stradale beside a set of classics including an SZ (above).

BENTLEY HISTORY VICTOR
Mike Oakins was presented with the Malcolm Jeal Award for Best Motoring History Article by the Society of Automotive Historians on 19 October for his piece 'The Paulin Bentley and Soltau Hay'. The feature occupied the entire issue No 4 of *1888: The Journal of the Bentley Memorial Foundation*.

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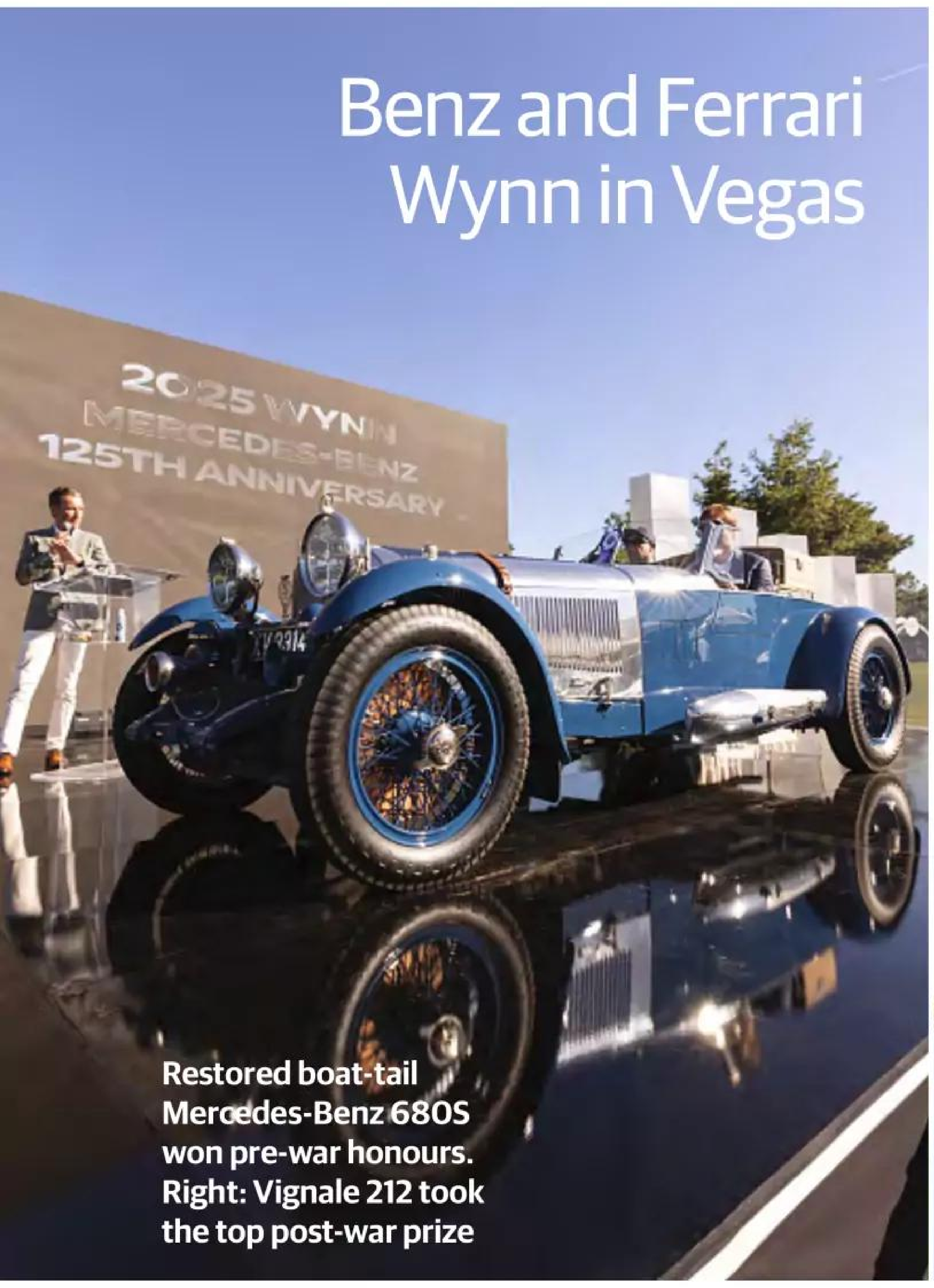

Restored boat-tail Mercedes-Benz 680S won pre-war honours. Right: Vignale 212 took the top post-war prize

The Wynn hotel Las Vegas hosted its fourth annual *concours d'élégance* from 30 October to 2 November, with a split Best in Show. Top prizes were awarded to pre- and post-war cars, respectively the 1929 Mercedes-Benz 680S Barker Tourer owned by Bruce McCaw, and Brian and Kimberly Ross' 1951 Ferrari 212 Export Vignale Coupé.

There were judged single-marque classes for Mercedes-Benz, Maserati, Ferrari, Lamborghini, Porsche, Rolls-Royce and Jaguar, while special awards recognised some less conventional concours cars, including a 1993 Honda NSX-R for Wynn Dream Machine and a 1994 Jaguar XJ220 given the Life in the Fast Lane award.

Non-judged displays included the largest-ever public group of Bugatti Veyrons, at 46 cars, to mark its 20th anniversary, while more than 40 Paganis also gathered. Lamborghinis were out in force, too, with 230 examples spanning a 2R tractor to 13 Veneno supercars.

Actor Sung Kang, best known for his role as Han in the *Fast & Furious* film series, displayed his Datsun 240Z build, powered by a twin-cam, 24-valve development of the original engine.

OBITUARIES

ANDREA DE ADAMICH 1941-2025

GETTY

Tall and characterised by his trademark black spectacles, Andrea de Adamich looked more like a student or a lawyer than a racing driver. But the Italian, who has died aged 84, notched up 30 Grand Prix starts. Born in Trieste into an aristocratic family, de Adamich happened upon motorsport by chance after being gifted a Triumph TR3. Hillclimbs and circuit racing led to winning the 1965 Italian Formula Three Championship and the '66 European Touring Car Championship. In 1968, he found himself in Formula One as a works Ferrari driver. After an unsuccessful start, including stints at McLaren in 1970 and March in 1971, de Adamich netted his first F1 points finish with a fourth place at the Spanish Grand Prix for Surtees in '72. But in 1973, while driving for Brabham, de Adamich was caught up in a nine-car British GP pile-up at Silverstone that left him with two broken legs and put an end to his F1 career.

His life around motorsport continued, however, via commercial ventures with Marlboro and in the media, first as a journalist for magazines such as *Autosprint* and then as an F1 TV commentator. He also established and ran a successful high-performance driving school at the Varano de' Melegari circuit. **DS**

QUENTIN WILLSON 1957-2025

Motoring journalist, television presenter and trading-standards campaigner Quentin Willson died on 8 November 2025, aged 68. The twin son of Bletchley Park codebreaker Professor Bernard Willson, the financially shrewd and charismatic Quentin had success as a car dealer in his 20s before turning to journalism. From a role at *Buying Cars* magazine, he launched a TV career by joining BBC's *Top Gear* from 1991 to 2001. He then used his fame to champion consumer affairs, campaigning against extra fuel duty and for better used-car warranties, and was an early supporter of electric cars. After a battle with lung cancer, he is survived by his wife and three children. **AM**

PETER WRIGHT 1946-2025

Aerodynamics pioneer Peter Wright, known for bringing ground effects to the fore in Formula One, has died at the age of 79. He experimented with aerodynamics straight out of Cambridge, under Tony Rudd at BRM, then followed him to Lotus. There, testing in the Imperial College wind tunnel, inadvertently sagging sidepods produced downforce and some crudely added cardboard skirts created more. He honed it on the Lotus 78 for the 79 that dragged Mario Andretti and the Lotus team to the World Championship double. Wright was a mainstay following Chapman's death and worked on FIA safety projects including the halo shield. **JP**

CLASSIC & SPORTS CAR

From the archives

Two-nine blues

Having chanced upon a 2005 photo of a Pinin Farina-bodied 1937 Alfa Romeo 8C-2900B at Pebble Beach, I was so struck by this gorgeous machine that I had to know more, and see more.

Although it is rarely seen in public, there were four big hits for chassis 412012 in the *Classic & Sports Car* back catalogue. In July 1992's *Past and Present* section, Jon Pressnell reported that this one-time Mille Miglia racer (third, in 1938) previously owned by Cisitalia creator Piero Dusio was thought lost for decades. It was still remarkably original when Terry Cohn bought it in 1992, reinstated its correct engine and began a restoration.

In August 1994, Mick Walsh took a thrilling drive of 412012 in Scotland, enthusing about its refined ride and racing history: 'Nothing could match the pace of Pintacuda in '37 or Biondetti in '38 on the epic Italian road race. Charging up the 70-plus hairpins of the Stelvio Pass, this very chassis, with its earlier *botticella* (barrel) cycle-winged body, trounced all, including the factory team of Two-Nines.'

Then, as if my prayers being answered wasn't enough, in the August 1998 issue John Surtees threw it around Curborough sprint circuit: "I can sense that the Alfa would feel competent on the road, but on the track it wants to oversteer at the slightest sight of a corner." **AM**

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RACING ON THE COAST

Established in 2009, the Algarve Classic Festival is now the largest historic motorsport event held on the Iberian Peninsula. It returned to the Autódromo Internacional do Algarve, known as Portimão, on the southern coast of Portugal from 24-26 October.

Saturday evening's inaugural 300km Algarve Sports Cars, for 1963-'72 prototypes and 1966-'80 GTs, was a highlight, even after a broken input shaft meant Steve Brooks and John Sheldon's Lola T290 couldn't start from pole. The Chevron B19 shared by Kyle Tilley, Olly Bryant and Kane Tilley was the early leader and regained the advantage after the pitstops, only to retire with electrical problems within the last 10 mins, leaving the similar car of John Emberson and James Bellinger to scoop victory.

That morning, as the Iberian Historic Endurance 1 grid of more than 40 pre-'65 cars lined up for the opening race, an unexpected rain shower brought an extra challenge. Chris Chiles Jnr and Bas Jansen (AC Cobra) mastered the damp conditions to claim the weekend's first win, 11.492 secs ahead of Paulo Lima and Ricardo Pereira (Ford GT40), who'd started on pole. The tables were turned for the rematch that afternoon, with Lima/Pereira victorious from Chiles Jnr/Jansen, and Olivier Muytjens and Brice Pineau (Ford GT40) 1.5 secs behind in third.

Rob Cull (Ford Escort RS 1800) dominated Saturday's Carrera 80s race on a drying track. He started from pole but lost the lead on lap

Emberson/Bellinger Chevron powers to victory in the debut 300km Algarve Sports Cars race

Jansen/Chiles Jnr Cobra took a win and a second in Historic Endurance 1

Above: a storming recovery drive lifted Chevron to second. Right: winning B21 of Guenat, Scemama, Mille and France

TCHAUL 31

Chevrons head stop-start 24 hours

Les 2 Tours d'Horloge, the only remaining continuous, round-the-clock historic motor race on the calendar, returned to Circuit Paul Ricard in the south of France from 31 October-2 November, for the fixture's 33rd running.

Rain and fog played their part in the event, with a rolling start and competitors spending 15 mins behind the safety car on a wet track. Those in the Sport Prototype division dominated qualifying, but struggled in the conditions. That left the Porsche 964s – of Damien Kohler, José da Rocha and Jean-Jacques Renaut; Karl, Hugues and César Vandewoestyne with Michel Mitieus; and José Garcia, Patrick Kolb, Patric Niederhauser and Andreas Bakkerud – to seize the early advantage. By hour three the fast Chevrons were back out in front, with the B19 of François Rivaz, Frank Stippler and Alexander Furiani leading from the B21 of Maxime Guenat, Armand Mille, Yves Scemama and Erwin France. The B21 eventually got ahead, only to then fall back to seventh with a starter problem.

Fog caused overnight stoppages, and racing resumed with four hours and 10 minutes left, with Rivaz/Stippler/Furiani first from Serge Libens, Marc de Siebenthal, Henrique Gemperle and Jean André Collard (KMW Porsche SP30). Guenat/Mille/Scemama/France were lying in third, but a canny pitstop strategy helped them take the lead and the win.

Second place went to the B19 that lost the lead after 30 mins in the pits with transmission issues. A stunning recovery drive from Stippler, finishing back on the lead lap and just 1 min 10 secs adrift, was quite an achievement.

seven, before fighting back to take the chequer almost a minute clear of Miguel Garcia (BMW 635CSi). Cull sealed the double victory on Sunday, this time just 2.865 secs from Garcia, having snatched the lead on the penultimate lap.

There was also a pair of Iberian Historic Endurance 2 contests across the weekend. In Saturday's competition, Bruno Duarte and Filipe Silva Jesus (Porsche 911 Carrera RS 3.0) landed the spoils, but they had to settle for second on Sunday after finishing 1.716 secs behind the Porsche 911 Carrera RSR 2.8 of Jean-Jacques Renaut. The Single Seaters Series was in action twice, too, with the Tatuus FR2000s of João Silva and Duarte Pires duelling in both, and securing a win each.

Sunday hosted two Group 1 Portugal races, with Bruno de Lima winning both in his Ford Escort RS 2000. And it was down to the wire in the thrilling, two-hour GT & Sports Car Cup: Chris Chiles Snr, Chiles Jnr and Jansen (AC Cobra 289) beat polesitters Tilley/Bryant/Tilley (Lotus Fifteen) by less than a second.

A dominant Rob Cull landed Carrera 80s spoils in his Ford Escort RS 1800

RACE READY

MATT BRISTOW

Down to the wire at Lydden

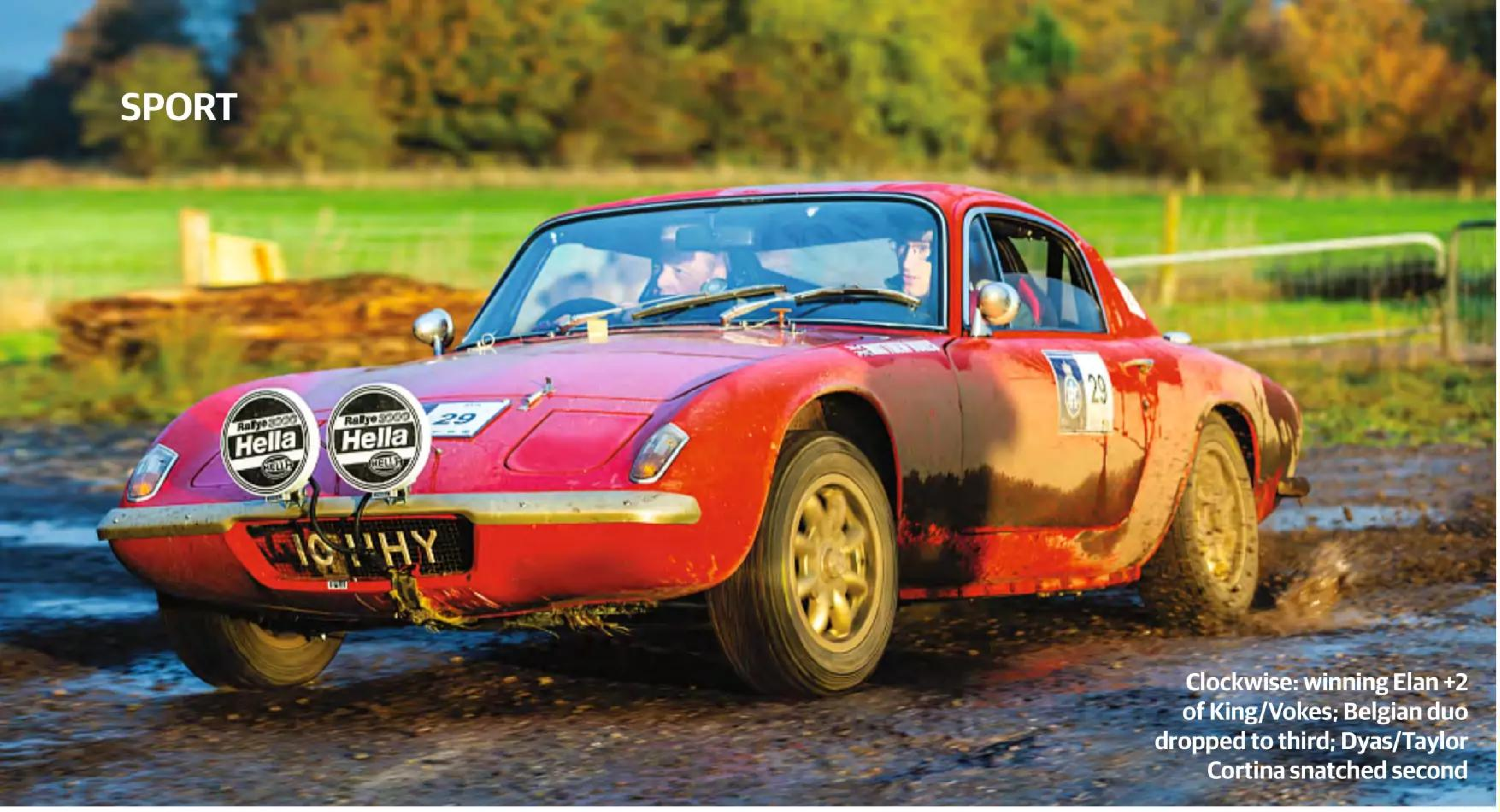
The 2025 Retro Rallycross Championship finale crowned its champions in spectacular style at Lydden Hill in Kent on 8-9 November. In the Under 1659cc class, Dan Swayland (Ford Escort Mk1) was virtually untouchable, defending his 2024 title in dominant fashion. Ian Biagi (Mini Clubman, above) pushed him hardest, taking second place across the heats and finals. The Super Retro category delivered plenty of drama as rivals Charlie French (Ford Escort Mk2) and Alan Crockett (Opel Kadett) went wheel-to-wheel. After a breathtaking final, French emerged victorious to claim the title from Crockett, with a three-way tussle for third behind them.

Former WRC star shines in Portugal

HISTORIC RALLY FAFE

Jari-Matti Latvala and Topi Luhtinen delivered a rallying masterclass on 7-8 November, sealing the FIA European Historic Rally Championship title in emphatic fashion at Portugal's Historic Rally Fafe. Behind the wheel of a Toyota Celica ST185 (right), Latvala was in a league of his own. "Winning this EHRC title meant a great deal to me," Latvala said at the finish. "I loved the rally. The stages were brilliant, and I had a lot of fun."

Latvala/Luhtinen finished with a commanding margin of 4 mins 43.5 secs over Valter Pierangioli and Michela Baldini (Ford Sierra Sapphire RS Cosworth 4x4), with Maciej Lubiak and Grzegorz Dachowski (Porsche 911 Carrera RS 2.7) completing the podium, as Dachowski took 2025's co-driver crown. Brit Will Graham (BMW M3), with mother Karen on the notes, wrapped up the FIA Category 4 Championship drivers' title, thanks to his year-long consistency, while Category 3 champions Jesus Ferreiro Pérez and Javier Anido Vázquez enjoyed the perfect season in their Ford Escort RS 1800, with six wins from six starts.



Clockwise: winning Elan +2 of King/Vokes; Belgian duo dropped to third; Dyas/Taylor Cortina snatched second

WILL BROADHEAD

Lotus trio locks out the podium on Rally of the Tests

This year's HERO-ERA RAC Rally of the Tests, which wound its way from Cumbria to Llandudno between 6-9 November, kicked off with the Prologue, a few hours in the darkness after which Paul Dyas and Martyn Taylor (Lotus Cortina) were the leaders, despite suffering gearbox issues.

It was from Kendal to Blackburn on the first full day, with 15 tests and six regularities. Dyas/Taylor maintained their advantage until held up by traffic, replaced by Jon Dunning and Pete Johnson (Ford Escort RS 2000), before a missed turn meant John King and Matthew Vokes (Lotus Elan +2) emerged as the new leaders by the day's final time control.

Even with a late-night dash for new wheels and tyres, King/Vokes extended their lead on day two, the longest of the rally, to 54 secs from the Kurt Vanderspinnen and Bjorn Vanoverschelde Lotus Cortina, which was 31 secs ahead of Dyas/Taylor.

After three and a half days, 720 miles, 30 tests and 22 regularities, King/Vokes sealed their first major rally victory, an impressive 1 min 20 secs clear of the chasing Cortina duo. Dyas/Taylor snatched second on the final day by just 8 secs from Vanderspinnen/Vanoverschelde. Meanwhile, in the accompanying Lite event, Dick and Harry Baines dominated aboard their Austin Mini Cooper 'S'.

MICK WALKER

Tight dices in Northamptonshire

Silverstone hosted the Historic Sports Car Club's 25th-anniversary Walter Hayes Trophy from 1-2 November. After four heats and four further races, it came down to the Grand Final for the Formula Ford contenders (above), with Andrew Rackstraw (Spectrum 011c) on pole. He'd beaten Jason Smyth (Van Diemen RF00/JL12) by 0.334 secs in heat two, but this time the tables were turned, as Smyth claimed victory by just 0.240 secs, an incredible result considering a penalty had him starting 13th.

It was similarly tight in the Carl Hamer Trophy Final, with less than a second covering the top four at the chequer, headed by Mark McKenna (Crosslé 35F), while James Clarke (Van Diemen RF90) denied Callum Grant (Van Diemen RF91) the Janet Cesar Memorial Trophy Final victory by only 0.071 secs.

Elsewhere, Alfa Romeo & Italian Intermarque Championship spoils were shared between Jamie Thwaites (Giulietta) and Barry McMahon (Giulia), while James Williams (Dallara F308) took both Tiedeman Trophy victories. First to the flag by 20.539 secs in the Mutton Grand Prix Closed Wheel Challenge was Charlie Kennedy (Nissan GTR), and Lewis Goff, Jarrett Clark and Riley Cranham took a win each in the Ginetta Junior Winter Series.

Daytona hosts enduro finale

The inaugural Historic Sportscar Racing Classic Endurance Championship season signed off at Daytona International Speedway in Florida, USA, on 8-9 November with the 11th Daytona Classic 24 Hour.

Gérard López and Marcel Fässler piloted their Lola T70 MkII to Group A glory for the third successive year, and also claimed Group F spoils in a Cadillac DPi. And there was a lot of silverware for Porsches: Mike and Andrew Jordan (997.2 GT3 Cup) landed Group G; Preston Brown and Denis Dupont (962, below) were top in Group C; Owen Trinkler (991.2 GT3 R) took a commanding Group E win; and Todd Treffert (911 Carrera Cup RSR 'Baby' turbo) prevailed in Group B.

HSR/JESSICA JOHNK

Paddock profile

CONNOR KAY

CARS *MG Midget, TVR Tuscan V6, Lotus Elan 26R*

SERIES *CSCC Swinging Sixties, CSCC Midget & Sprite Challenge, Equipe Libre*

"Watching at Goodwood as a child inspired me to get a classic, which inevitably was a racer. I've been competing since 2022, with the Classic Sports Car Club's Swinging Sixties, and I've had some amazing experiences.

"CSCC's wet night races at Spa in 2024 were challenging, with failing lights and wipers, so to win was a bonus. Third at Equipe Classic Racing's six-hour race at Donington in 2025, despite mechanical issues, was memorable, too. Coming full circle and racing at the Revival is the dream."

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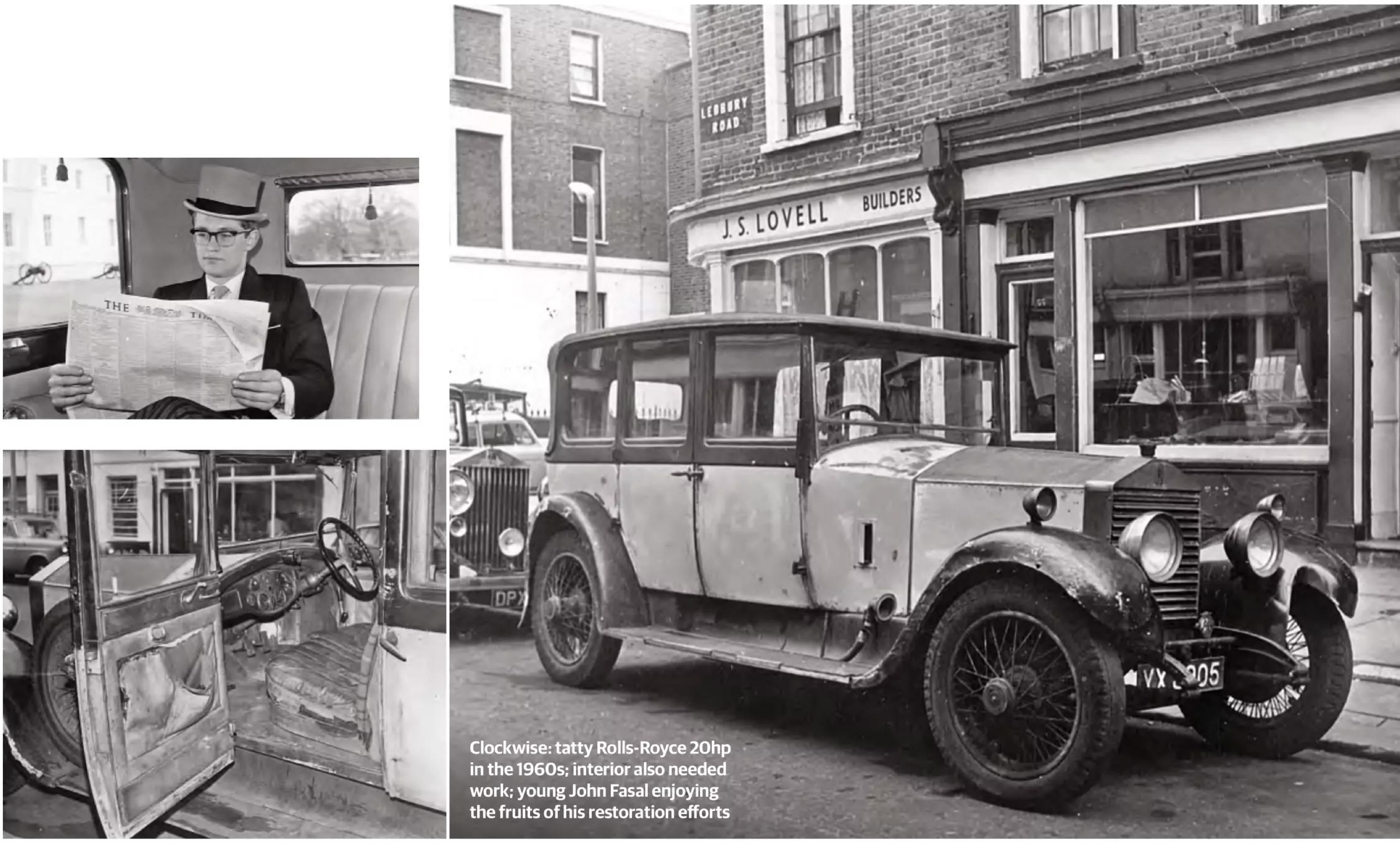


Clockwise: tatty Rolls-Royce 20hp in the 1960s; interior also needed work; young John Fasal enjoying the fruits of his restoration efforts

A STORIED ROYCE KEEPS ON ROLLING

Most of the cars to feature in *Lost & found* have been discovered in a dilapidated state after many years of poor storage, but this 1928 Rolls-Royce 20hp with saloon coachwork by Park Ward is a very different tale. Although it has a chequered history, it has come out of long-term shelter complete and capable of running again.

The car was bought new in 1928 by Brenda Egerton, the Countess of Wilton, and delivered to her at The Savoy Hotel. She passed away in 1930, and the Rolls-Royce was acquired by Edith May Runciman of Cambridge, who kept it until 1949. It is thought that the car was laid up during the war.

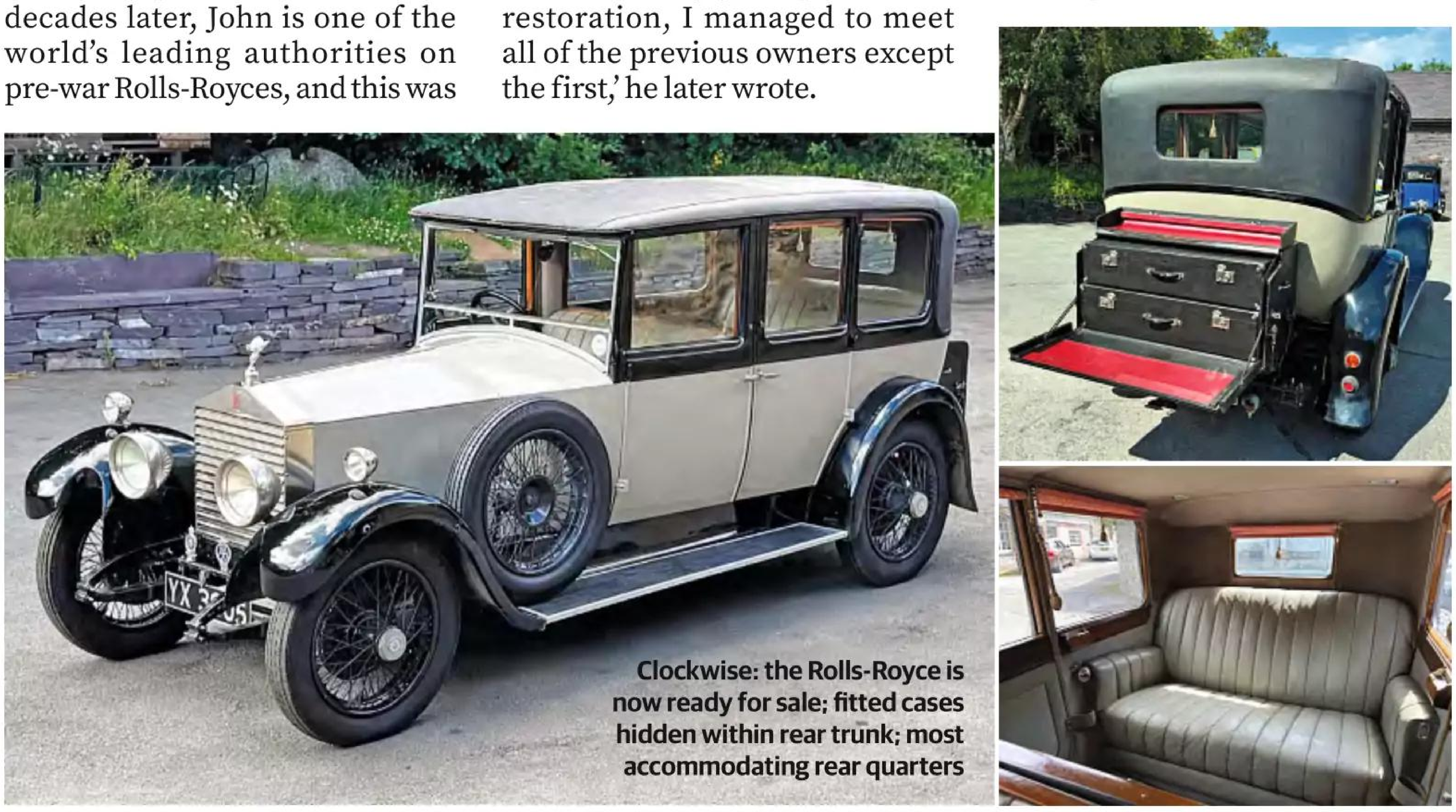
The following owner, a Mrs Dulcie Bevington, only had it for a year before passing the Royce on to William Collingwood, a farmer from Newbury who then flipped it to George Petherick, a solicitor from St Austell. In 1954 it was bought by Alfred George Fiddes Watt, son of the famous portrait artist and Academician. He ran the car into the ground, and it was sold to Londoner John Fasal in '64.

John was an apprentice antique furniture restorer who'd spotted YX 3905 on a trip to Portobello Road. It had been standing outside a shop for nine months, unused, and he acquired it for £100. Six decades later, John is one of the world's leading authorities on pre-war Rolls-Royces, and this was the car that spurred him to write his acclaimed history of the 20hp.

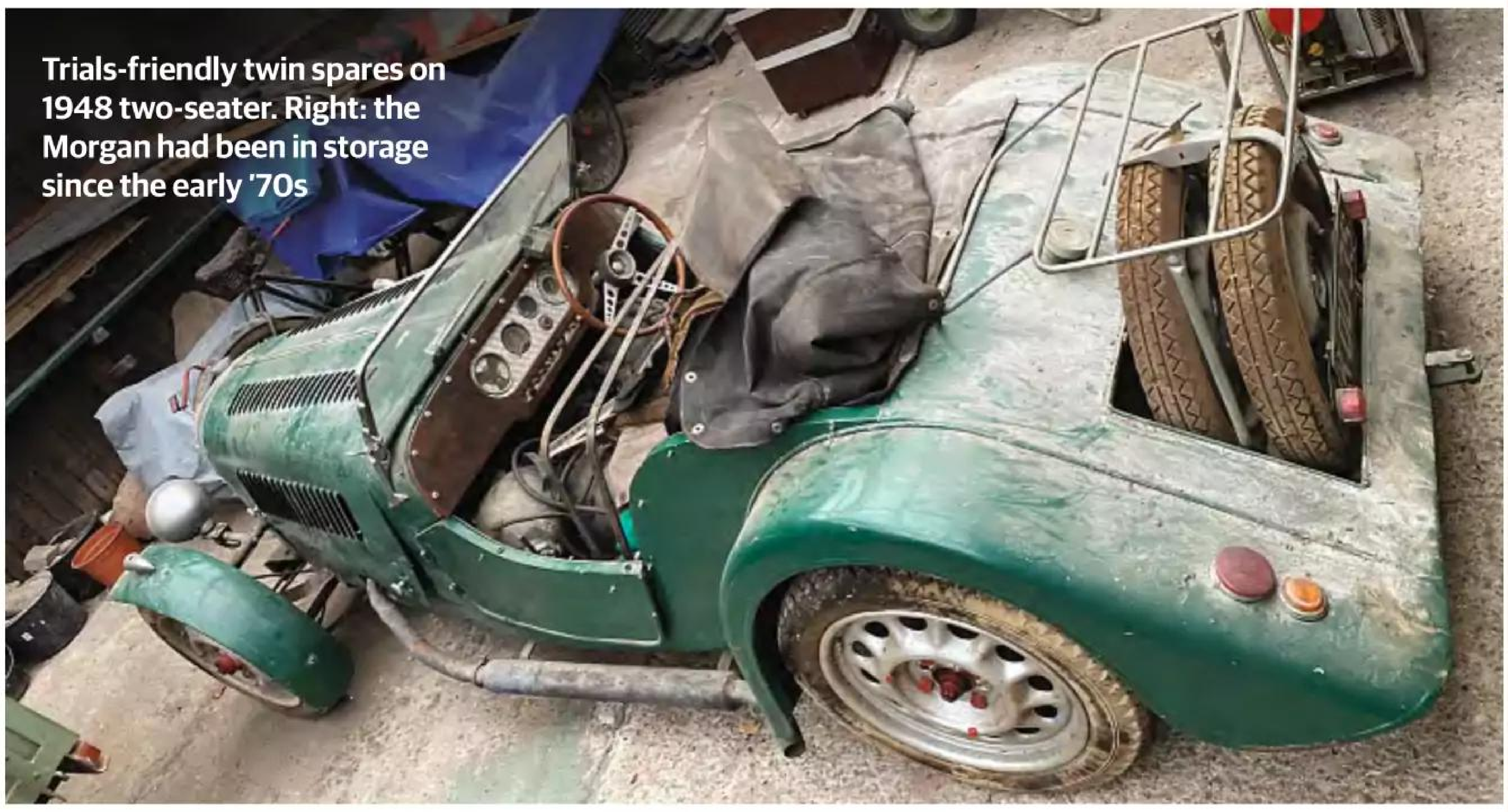
As an apprentice he had little money, so he sold his collections of stamps, swords, medals and coins to start the restoration. The car had been kept out in the open for the previous decade and the coachwork had suffered, but he slowly got the 20hp, which he named 'The Countess', back to good order. 'After a great deal of research, which I found to be one of the most enjoyable parts of the restoration, I managed to meet all of the previous owners except the first,' he later wrote.

In 1988, he sold the car to David Evans from the Birmingham area, who used it sparingly until 1990 when it went into his clean, dry garage, never to be used again.

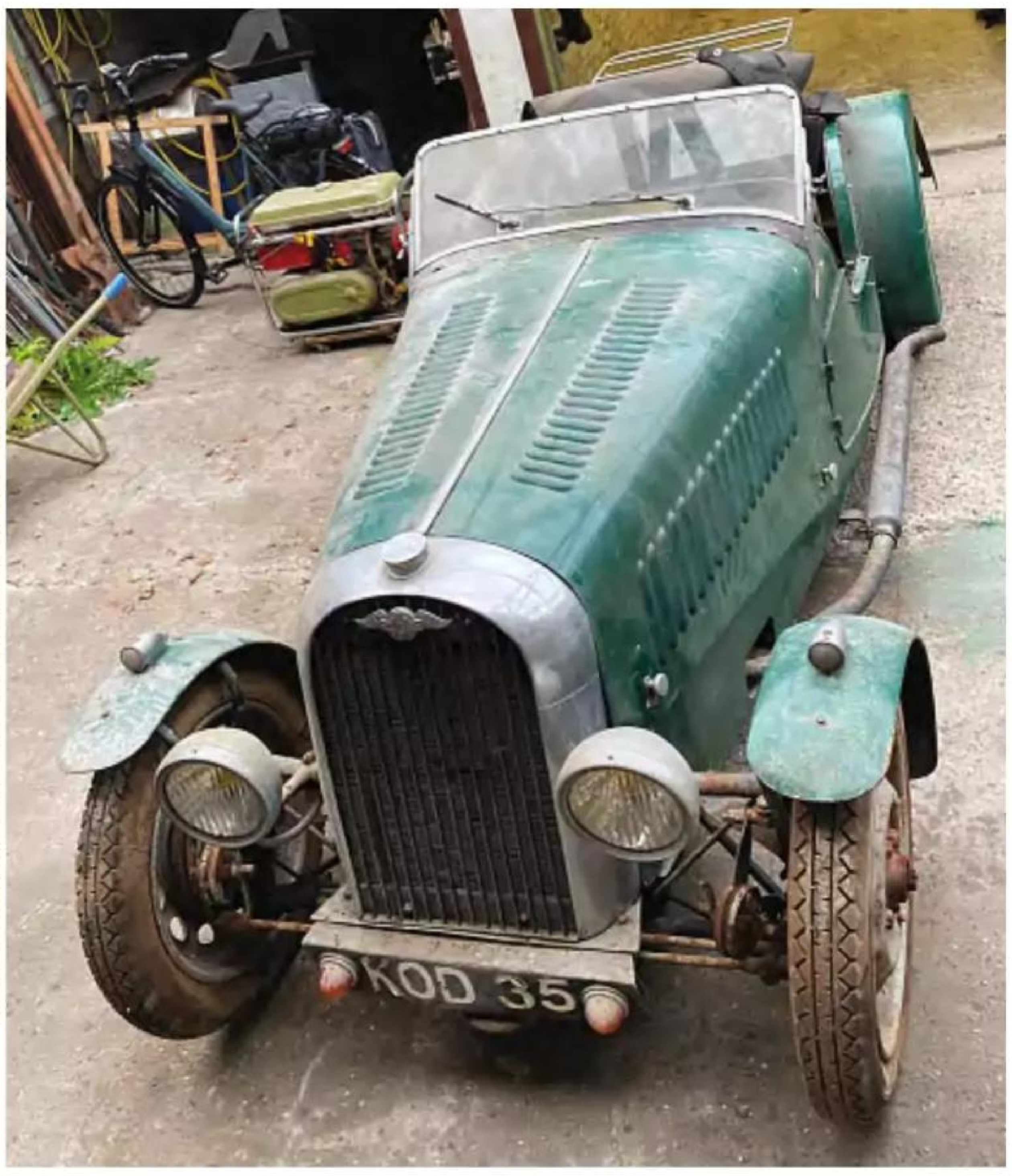
It is now with Rolls-Royce dealer The Real Car Co in Bethesda, North Wales. "The engine was free but took careful recommissioning, and all of the fuel lines and the carburettor were completely gummed up with stale, old fuel," says Ian Johnston, the vendor now looking for the car's next owner.



Clockwise: the Rolls-Royce is now ready for sale; fitted cases hidden within rear trunk; most accommodating rear quarters



Trials-friendly twin spares on 1948 two-seater. Right: the Morgan had been in storage since the early '70s



A MORGAN GONE DUTCH

During WW2, Morgan's Malvern factory kept a department open for spares and repairs, with the main facility producing parts for anti-aircraft guns and aircraft undercarriages, and carrying out general precision engineering. Part of the factory was also leased to Sir Alan Cobham for flight-refuelling experiments.

Car production was restarted soon after the war – because the bodywork was made of wood and aluminium, it was easy to resume – but the cars did not sell well. Peter Morgan said that during this period he would take new models to the London dealership to put on show, always taking one of a different colour and bringing back the previous car unsold. He did not want the public to know that sales were slow.

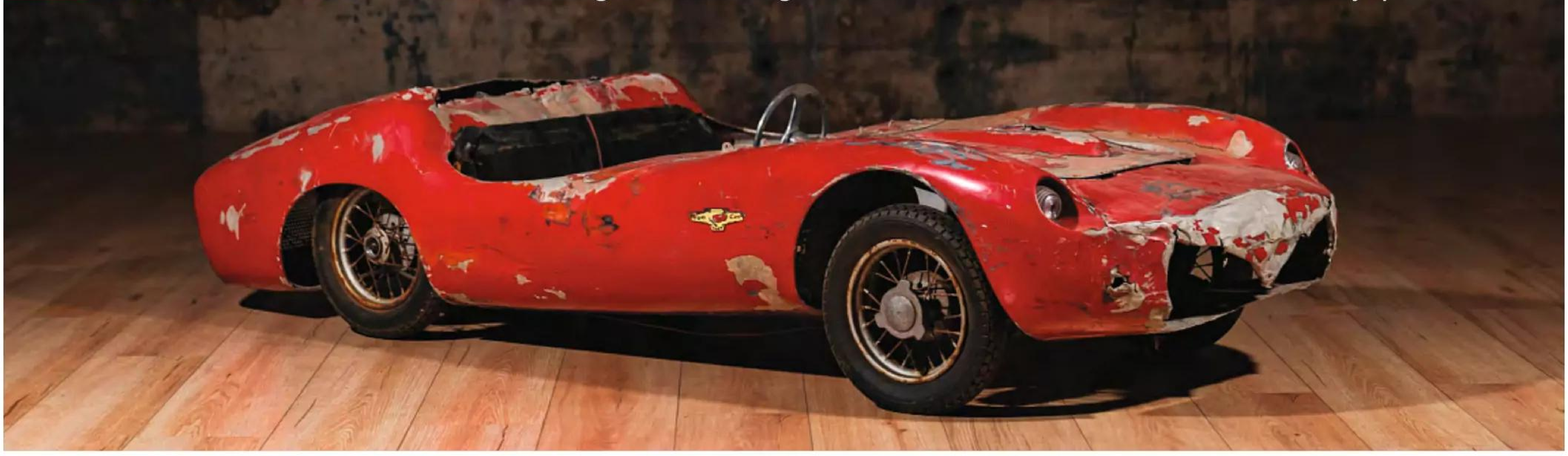
In June 1948, a new Morgan chassis left Pickersleigh Road, Malvern, bound for Victoria Garage in St James, Exeter, where it was bodied by a local coachbuilder. Once completed, the car was road-registered KOD 35 in May 1949. The original logbook does not survive, but the continuation book from 1957 reveals eight different owners, from Torquay to Carmarthen. During that period the colour was changed from red to white, and it is now green. The documentation shows that at some stage there was a change from the 1267cc Standard engine to a 948cc BMC unit. The last recorded owner in the UK was Roger Cleeve in Carmarthen some time around 1970, before the car went to The Netherlands, where it was acquired by Roger Lefevre. He used it for some time, during which period it received some accident damage that has never been completely repaired. In the early 1970s it was bought by Hendrik Barels, whose son, Roedby, inherited it seven years ago. "The Morgan never received the attention and time needed for its restoration," he says. "It was stored away in a small garage with many non-automobile items." The Morgan is now up for sale. Email roedby@gmail.com

KIDS' FERRARINA IS ONE OF A KIND

It was not long after the earliest cars were seen on the streets that children wanted one that would fit them. At first only available for the offspring of the very rich, over the years lesser-priced examples were created. Many have become very collectible – even the humble Austin J40 is now worth thousands in good order.

Enzo Monari was one of Enzo Ferrari's most trusted engineers. In the late 1950s, he made a one-off child's car based on the pontoon-winged 250 Testa Rossa, and he presented it to a delighted *Il Commendatore*. Monari founded his own firm, MS Ferrarina Modena, and made 25 of the model for general sale, sanctioned by Ferrari. He described his second model as "an honest miniature of the Le Mans-winning TR61". Piero Drogo's *carrozzeria* assembled the bodies, which returned to Monari for final fitting. The car had an electric motor, coil-sprung suspension, working headlights and, to the delight of any child, a horn.

An example has recently been acquired for sale by LBI Ltd of Philadelphia, USA. It was purchased new by the Rockefeller family, who owned it for many years and must have given it heavy use. The car was maintained by the family's mechanic, to whom it was later donated. He had intended to restore it, but never did; it later went to a collector. "With its unmatched history and authenticity, this child's car is truly one of a kind," says Andrew Mastin of LBI. "No other example was fitted with the Drogo badge, and its status within the larger history of Ferrari makes it a must-have for any *tifosi*."



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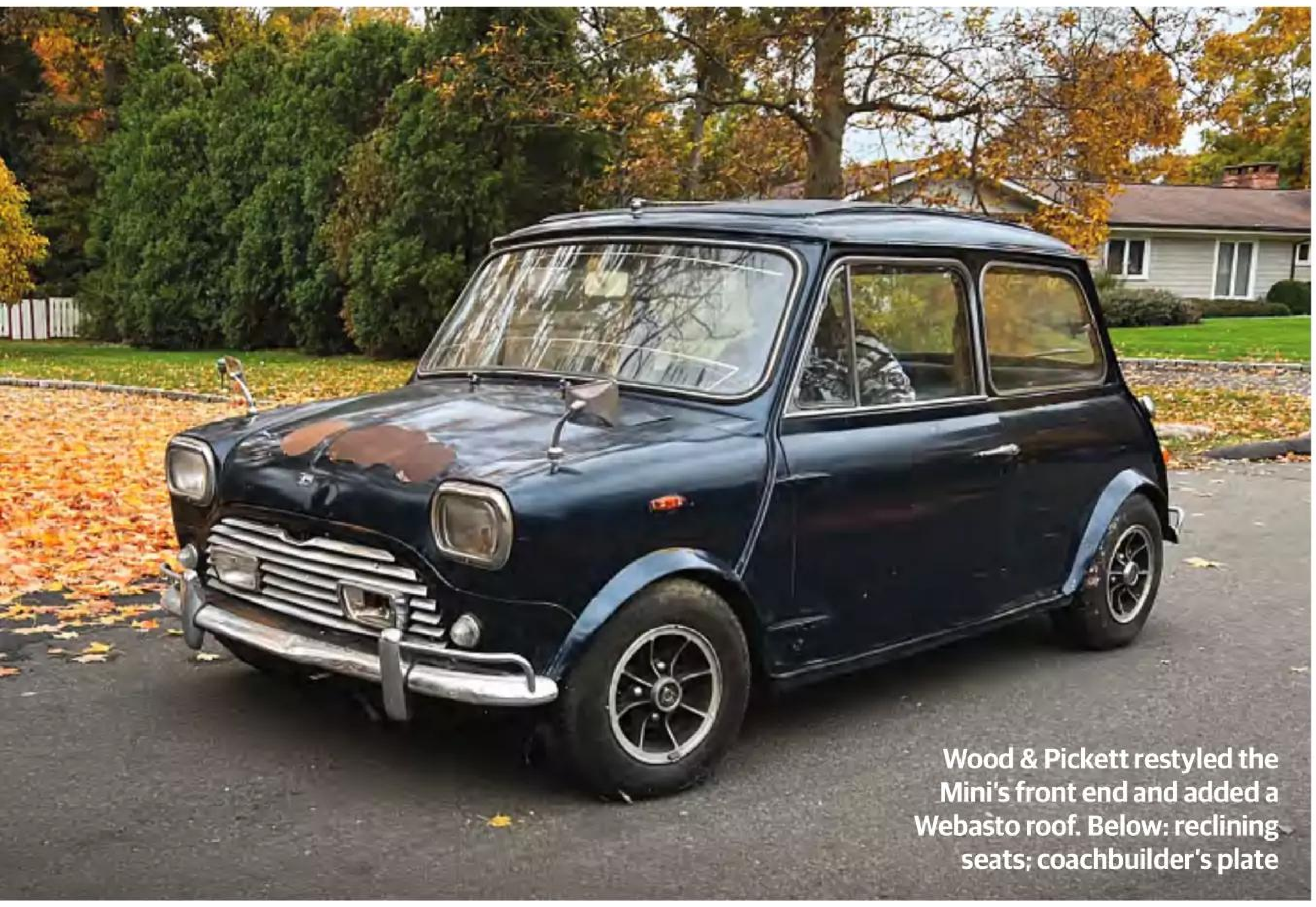


Wood & Pickett restyled the Mini's front end and added a Webasto roof. Below: reclining seats; coachbuilder's plate

SPECIAL MINI COOPER 'S' SURFACES STATESIDE

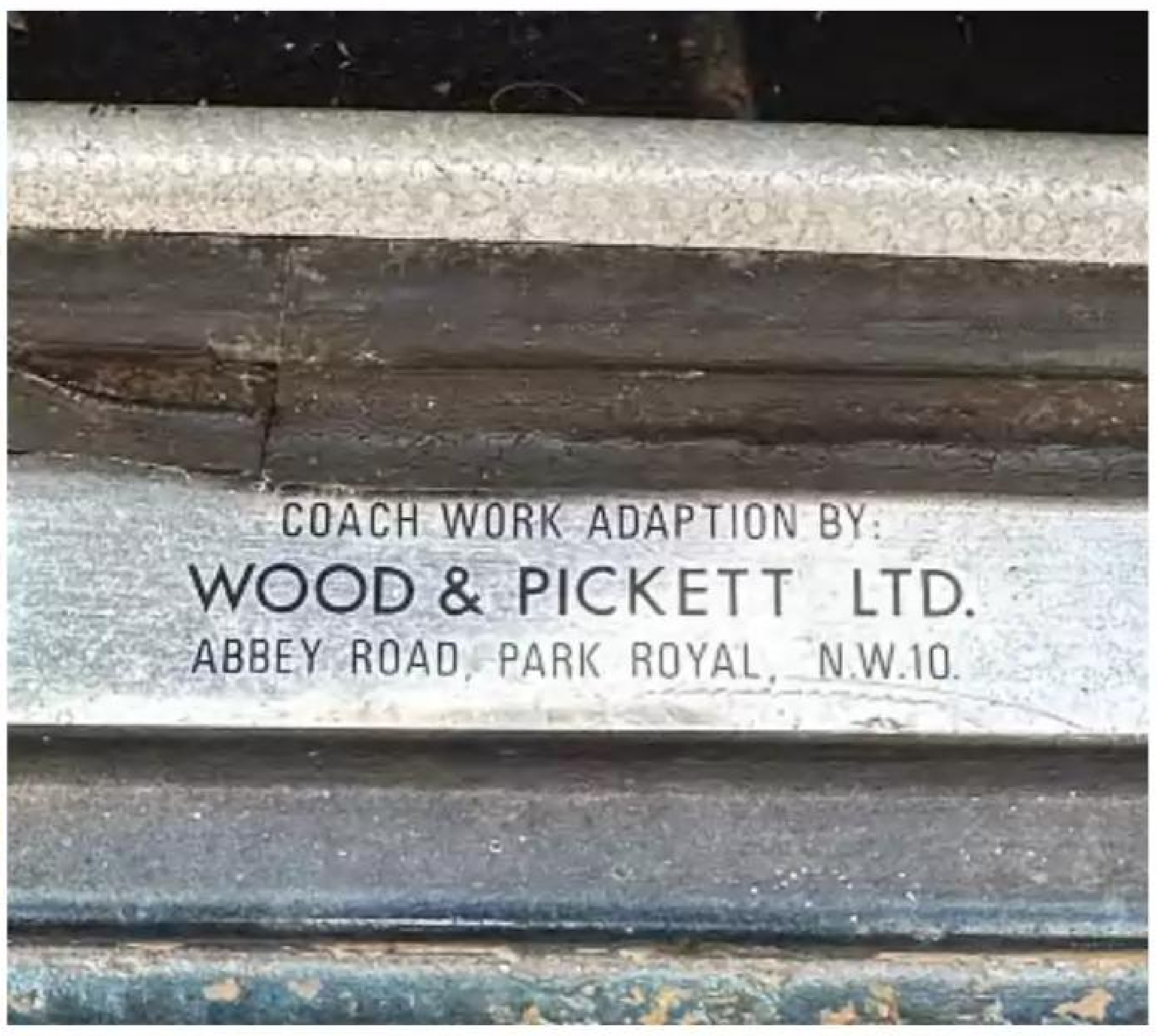
Richard Jenkins of Atlanta, Georgia, USA, was recently able to acquire a rare, matching-numbers Mini that, prior to his ownership, had been with the same family since it was new in 1967.

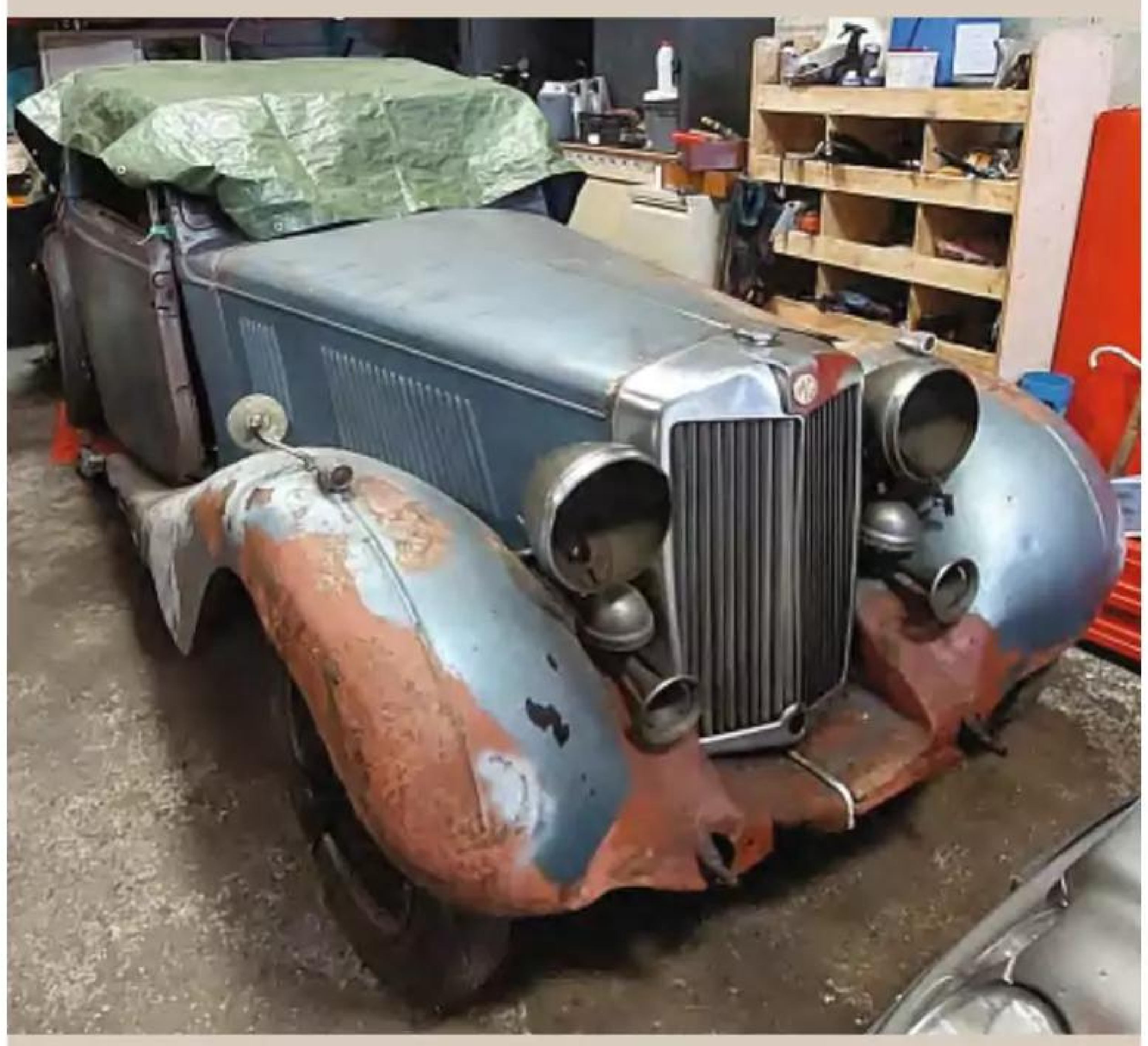
The previous owner's father had bought the desirable Cooper 'S' new in London and commissioned Wood & Pickett to complete various luxury modifications before exporting it to New York in 1968. The colour was changed from Tartan Red with a black roof to a Rolls-Royce Seychelles Blue metallic, and distinctive rectangular headlights were installed, along with a Webasto sunroof. The numberplate was recessed at the back and a rear wiper was added, plus heated 'screens front and rear, and a reversing light.

Inside, it was switched from right- to left-hand drive and fitted with black, Aston Martin-style reclining leather seats with matching door cards, along with Wilton wool carpets. There are electric windows and a leather-trimmed dashboard with a 120mph speedometer, rev counter, plus gauges for oil, fuel, water and battery charging.

"The car was in storage for 30 years prior to me purchasing it," explains Richard, "and the last time it was registered for the road was in 1995, in Connecticut. I brought the Mini back to life, draining both of the fuel tanks, rebuilding the carburettors, changing all of the fluids, tuning the engine and rebuilding the braking system."

The Cooper sits on new, aftermarket wheels (Richard has kept the original Dunlops), and there is a new bonnet, although he believes the original could be saved. He has now decided to sell, saying: "The car could be used and enjoyed as it is – the interior is very presentable and the paintwork could be touched up – but the new owner may want to embark on a full restoration." Email mr.richardjenkins@yahoo.com

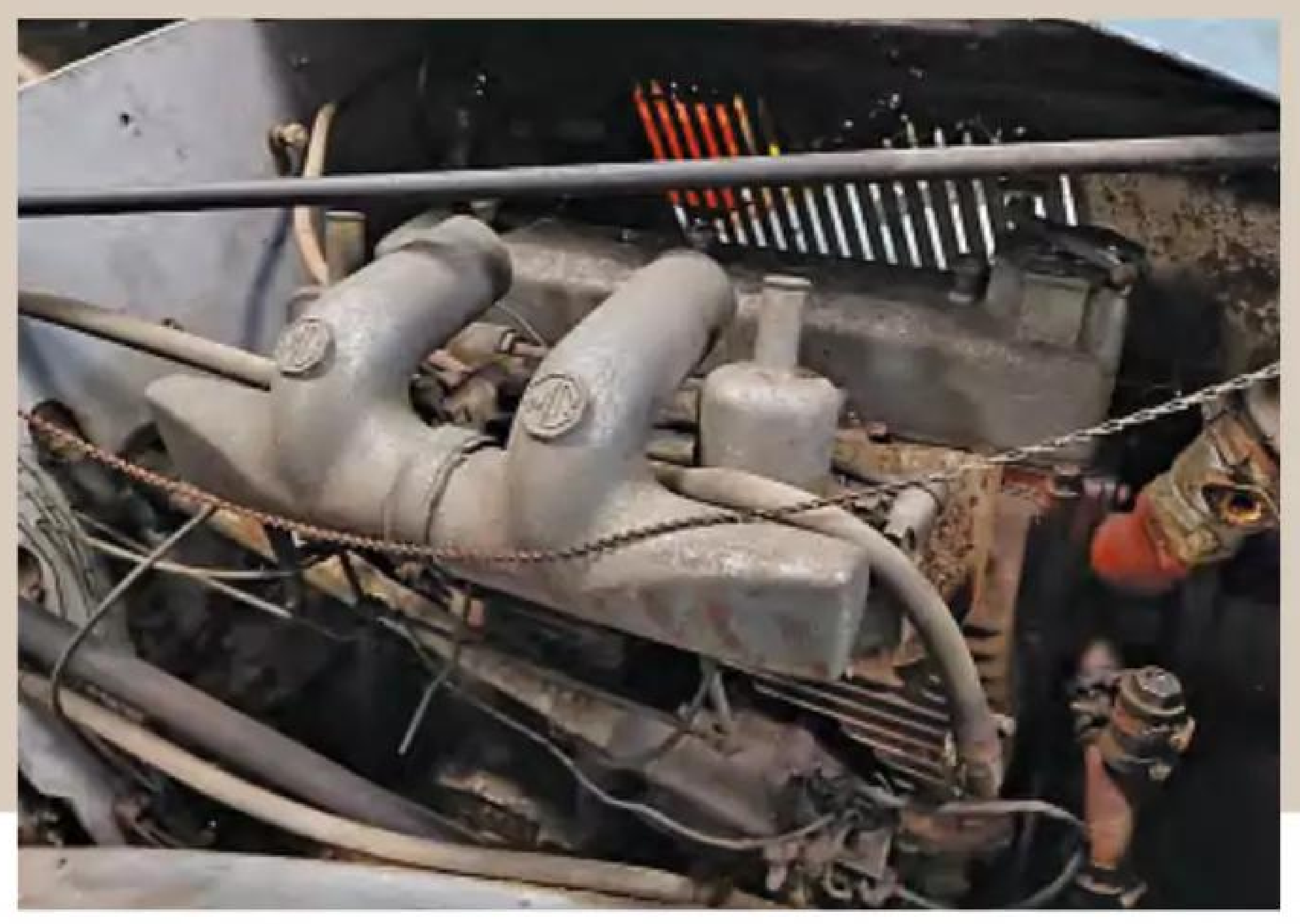




QUELLE SURPRISE! MG WA UNEARTHED IN FRANCE

The MG Car Club's French arm always has a stand at Rétromobile in Paris. In 2025, members were approached by local man Jeremie, who said that he had a 1939 MG WA tucked away in his shed. This greatly interested Philippe Douchet, an MG historian who was helping out on the stand and thought the car unlikely to be a WA, which was the last new model MG built before WW2 – only 369 were made, and few made it overseas.

"The car was in a corner, lost among motorcycle parts and various other devices," says Philippe, "but it looked complete. The chassis plate shows number WA 0464, it looks like a real WA and, what's more, it's a Tickford version." Documents reveal that it was registered new in Liverpool, FKC 170. It was purchased by racer, historian and collector Serge Pozzoli in the late 1970s and taken to France to join what was described at the time as the most beautiful French private car collection. By 1982, it had been acquired by another collector, Guy Valin, and Jeremie bought it when Valin's estate was auctioned off. Jeremie had wanted to restore the car, but now finds he has neither the budget nor the time.



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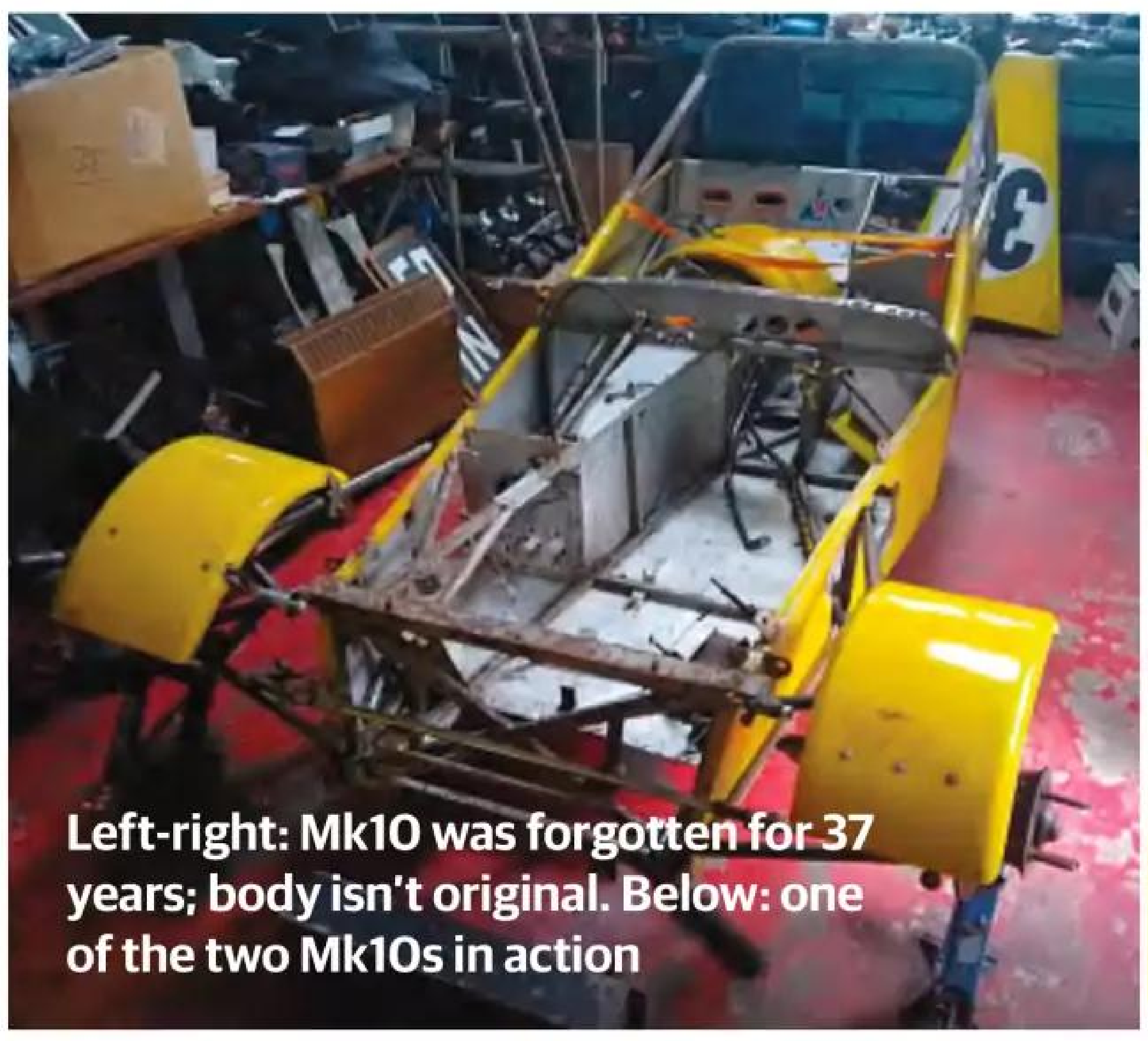
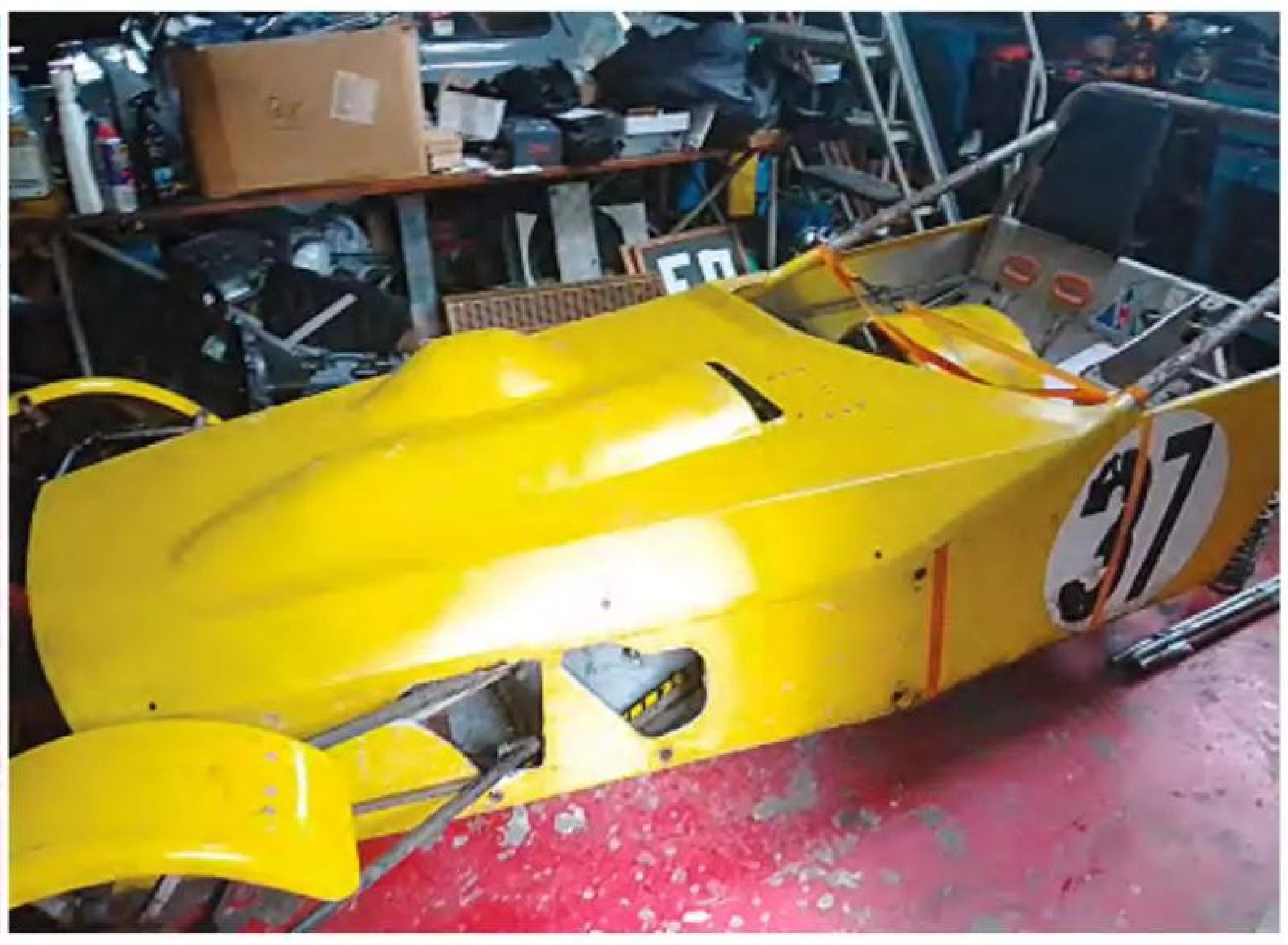



Left-right: Mk10 was forgotten for 37 years; body isn't original. Below: one of the two Mk10s in action

ACTUALLY YES, THAT *IS* MY CAR

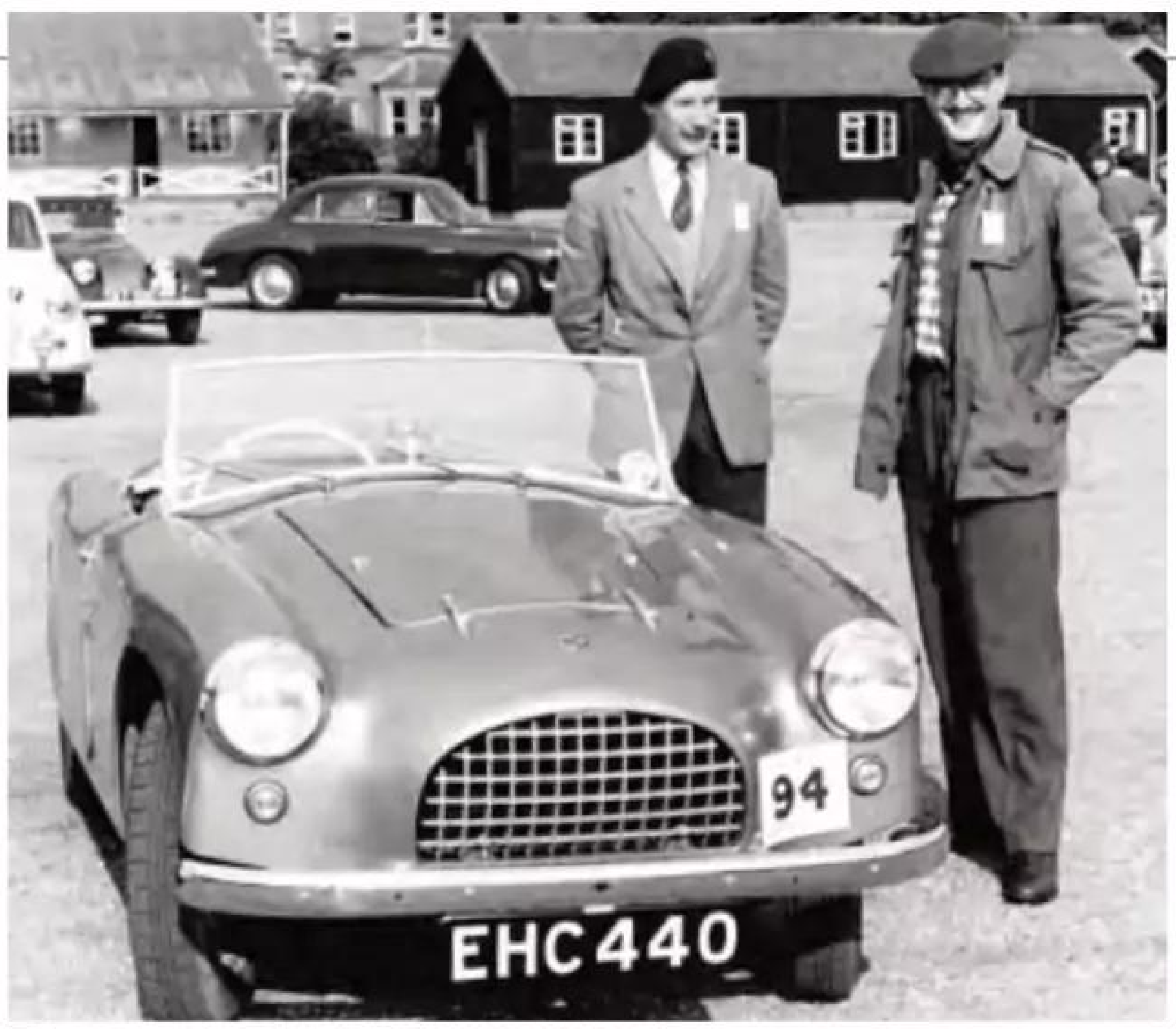
Ed Glaister has a strange story to tell. "A couple of months ago, I received a call from someone saying they had heard I had a Centaur," he says. "I replied that I did not, but then remembered that 37 years previously I had bought one, and a friend was kind enough to store it because I was rebuilding another car at the time. I had utterly forgotten about it! Now I am able to free up the space he had lost for all that time."

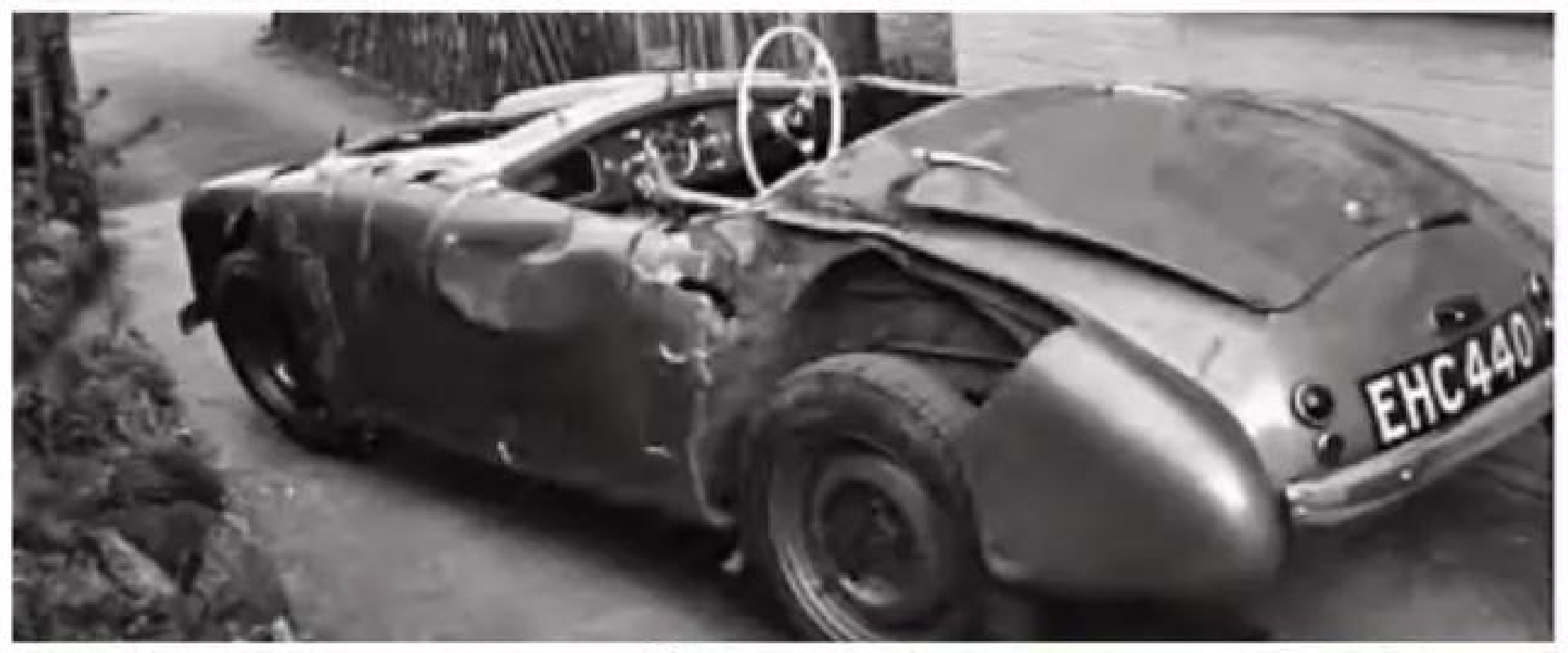
Centaur sports cars was the brainchild of Richard Scott, who in the early 1960s had built an Austin Seven Special in a lock-up on Lulworth Road, south-east London. He then went to work for Don Sim, who had been a partner in Yimkin making Clubmans cars. When that folded, he formed Tunex Conversions, which became Diva Cars. In 1965, Scott left Diva and moved to Halesworth in Suffolk, where in 1965 he founded Centaur Engineering and produced a limited number of sports-racing cars for the 750, 1172 and Clubmans formulae. In 1978, the premises was demolished to make way for a new road.

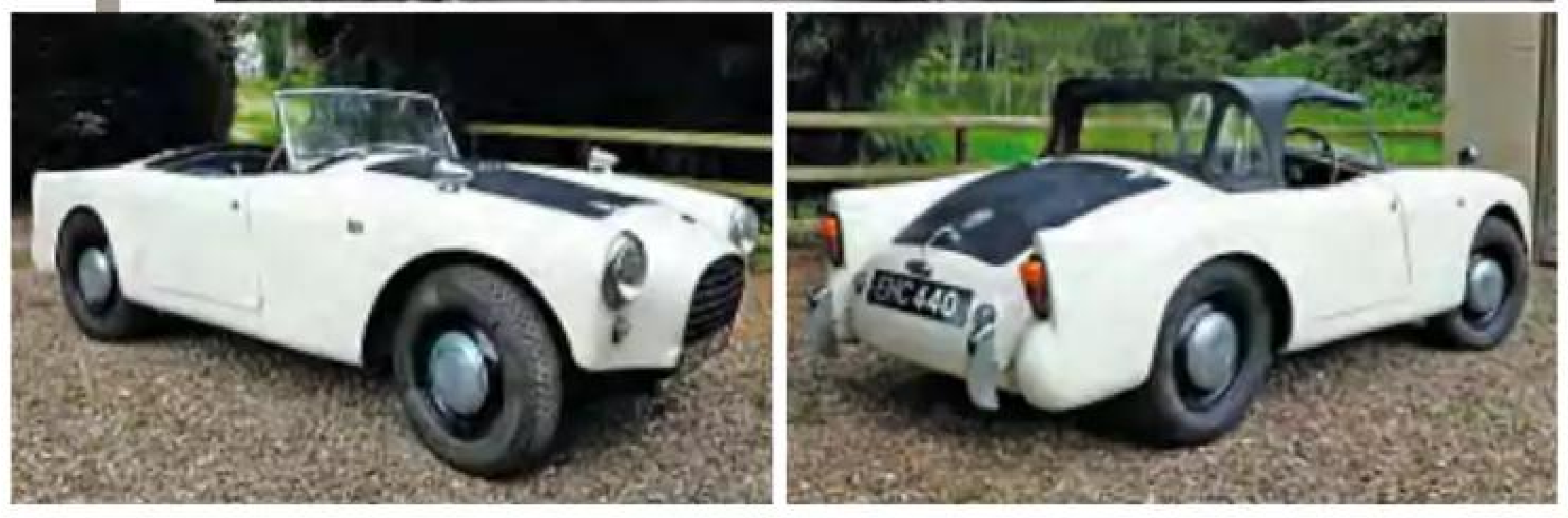
The 1969 Mk10 now owned by Ed was bought from Jester Racing of Shepperton for £330. It is one of only two made, and it is dismantled and apparently incomplete. "There is the frame, most of the front suspension and some of the rear," he says. "There is some bodywork, but it's not original. Everything is in the condition that might be expected of anything stored under cover but neglected for a considerable period."

Prior to buying the Mk10, Ed had previously restored and sold a Centaur Mk9 Formula Ford. "Even more of a coincidence, my first racing car, years earlier, was a Yimkin Formula Junior," he says, "and it turns out that Richard Scott had a hand in the construction of that car, too!"

A TURNER KIT'S TALE







The number EHC 440 was issued to John Hissey for his Turner, which he had made from a kit. It was one of 100 cars fitted with the original, round-tail body and was built to be his wife's car, but it was subsequently entered in a number of competitive events (left), the most successful of which resulted in a class win in the two-day 1957 London Rally.

Later, his wife had a major accident in the Turner. She was not hurt, but the bodywork was seriously damaged (left, centre), so John rebuilt it with a later body featuring small rear fins (left, bottom).

It became too small for a growing family, so he passed it on to his sister. The car was later acquired by Turner Register member Brian Groves, who in the early 1980s attended a number of Fairthorpe Sports Car Club events. It sat in Groves' garage for 33 years, but, according to the Turner Register's Russell Filby, the car has now passed to Chris Jones. However, says Chris: "It needs more time than I have. I don't want it to end up waiting another long period for me to make a start on it."

As a result, it is now for sale, currently fitted with an 850cc BMC A-series engine but with the original 950 included. Enquiries can be forwarded via *C&SC*.

Look familiar?

Want to track down a lost love or looking for history on your current classic? Send details and pictures to the p3 address or email requests to ***alastair.clements@haymarket.com***

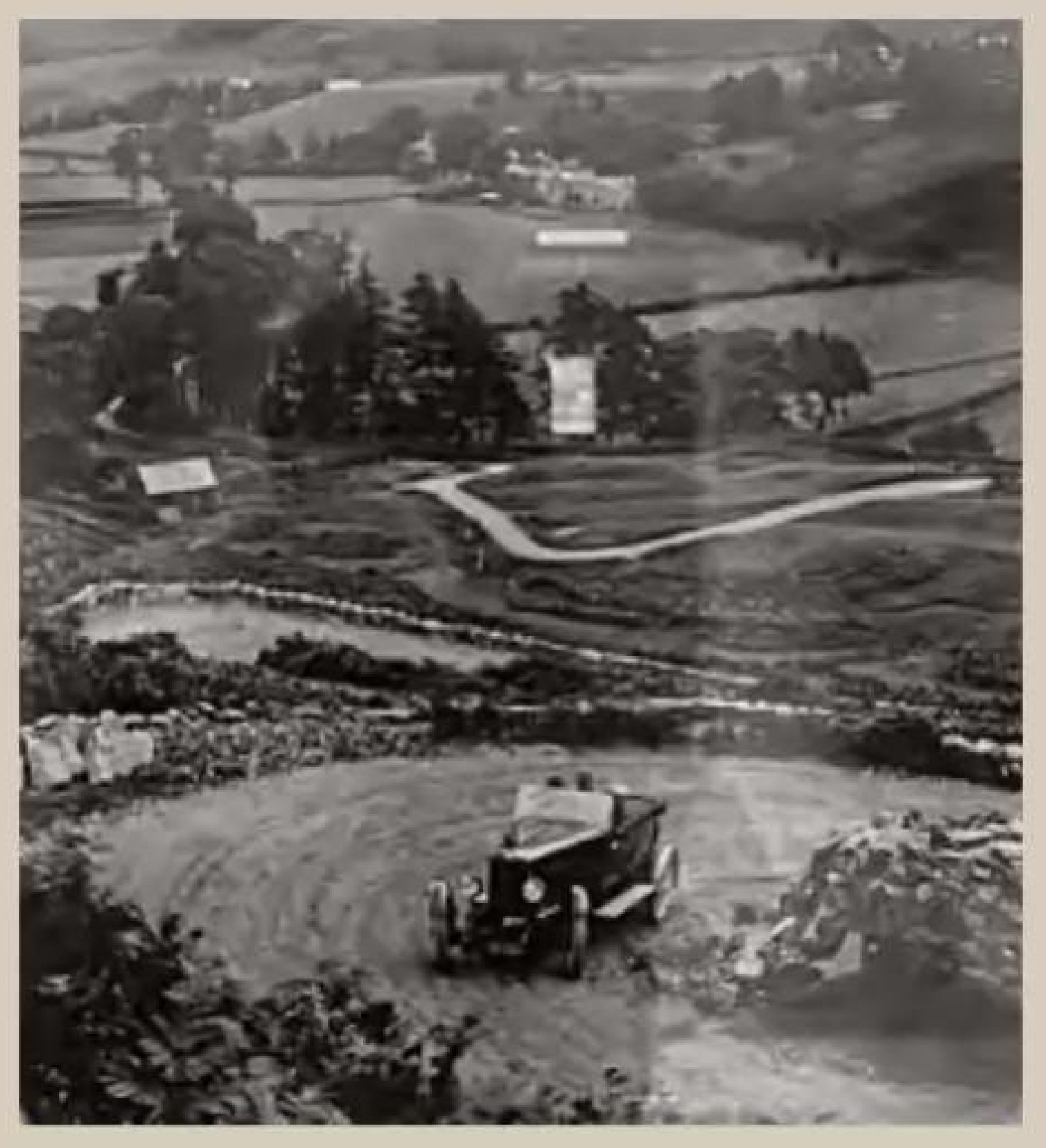
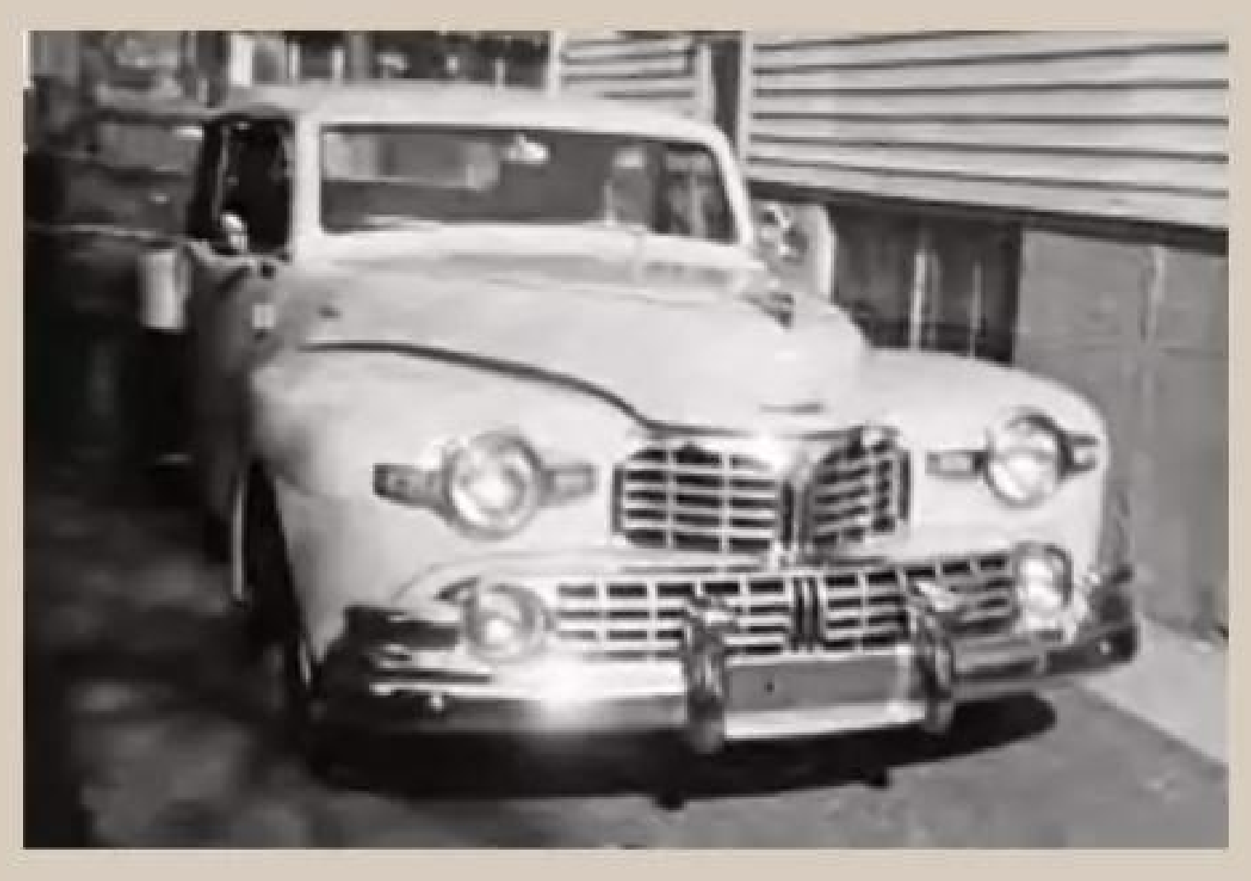


PHOTO OPPORTUNITY

John Arkwright owns a 1926 Sunbeam, and during a recent visit to a Lake District pub he saw a photograph of a Sunbeam on the wall. His grandparents lived nearby, and John would like to know if the car in the photo was that of his grandfather, who also had a Sunbeam. John is also keen to contact the current owner of the car. It is registered UK 1560 and may have been with the same owner since 2007. Email john.arkwright@jarkwright.co.uk



KNUDSEN CONTINENTAL

Ryan Keogh would like to know if the 1948 Lincoln Continental of his late grandfather, Conrad Knudsen, survives. Little about the car is known, but it had been fitted with a 327cu in Chevrolet Corvette engine. Ryan is also keen to know if there is a family connection with Semon Emil 'Bunkie' Knudsen and his father Lieutenant General William Knudsen, both of whom were auto-industry leaders. Email ryankeogh1966@gmail.com

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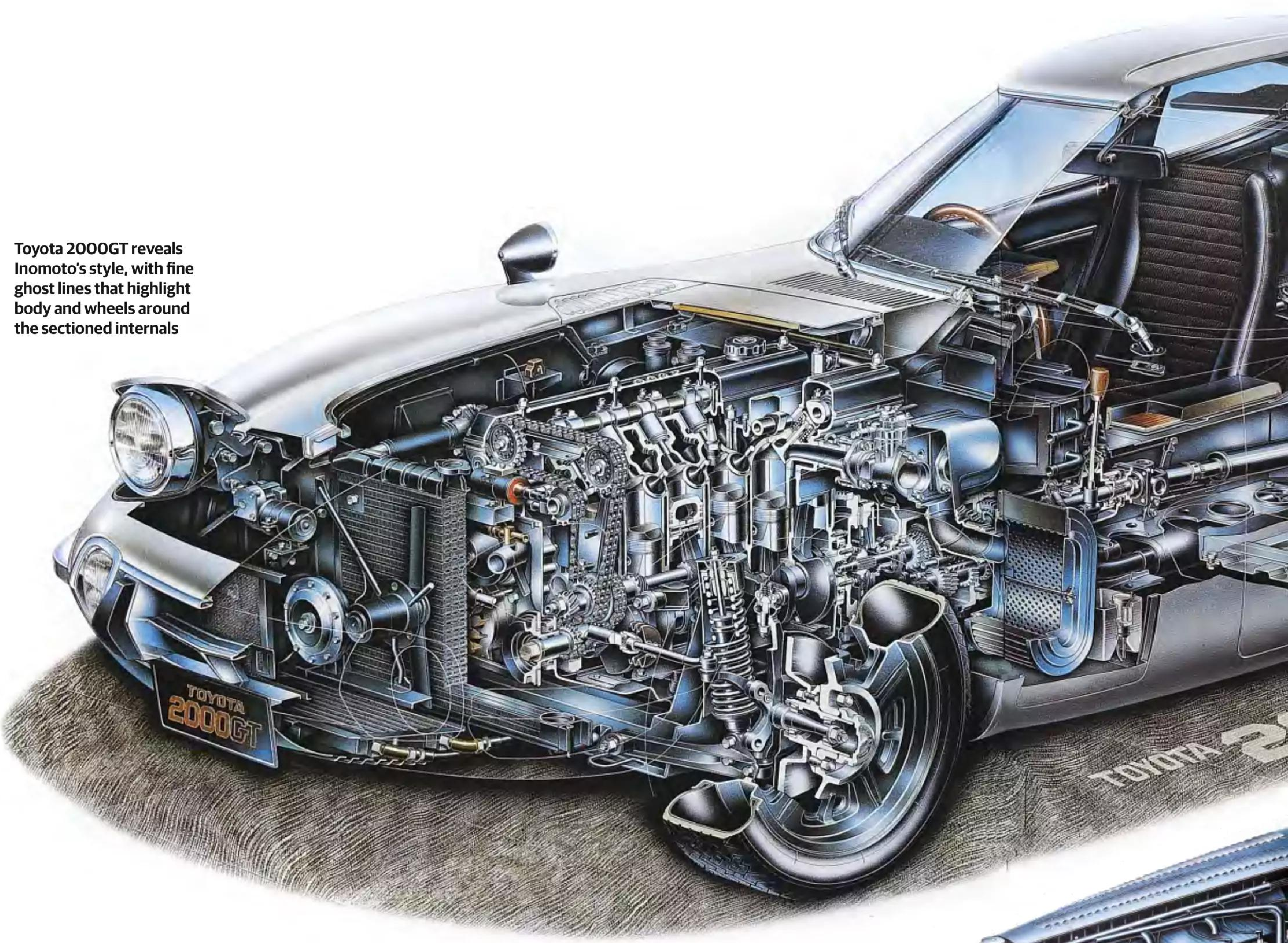
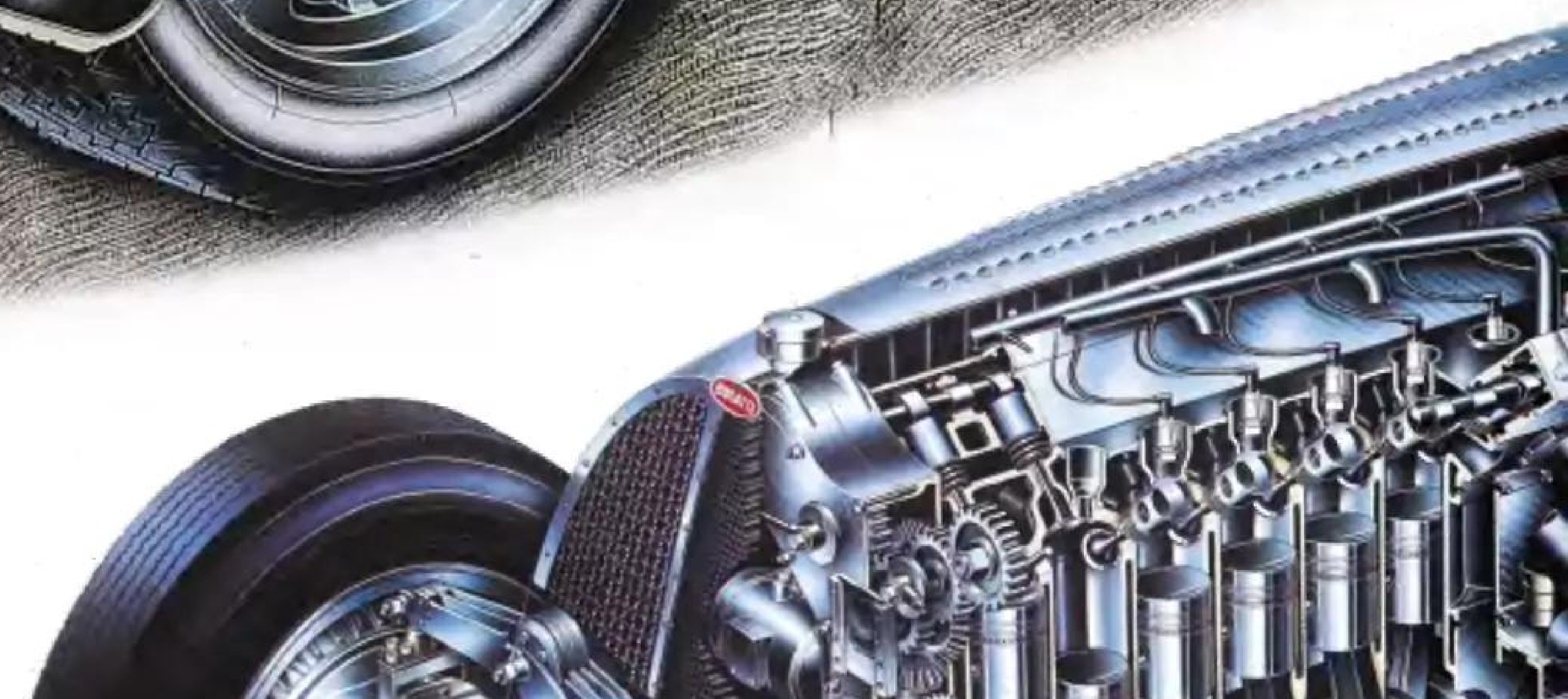
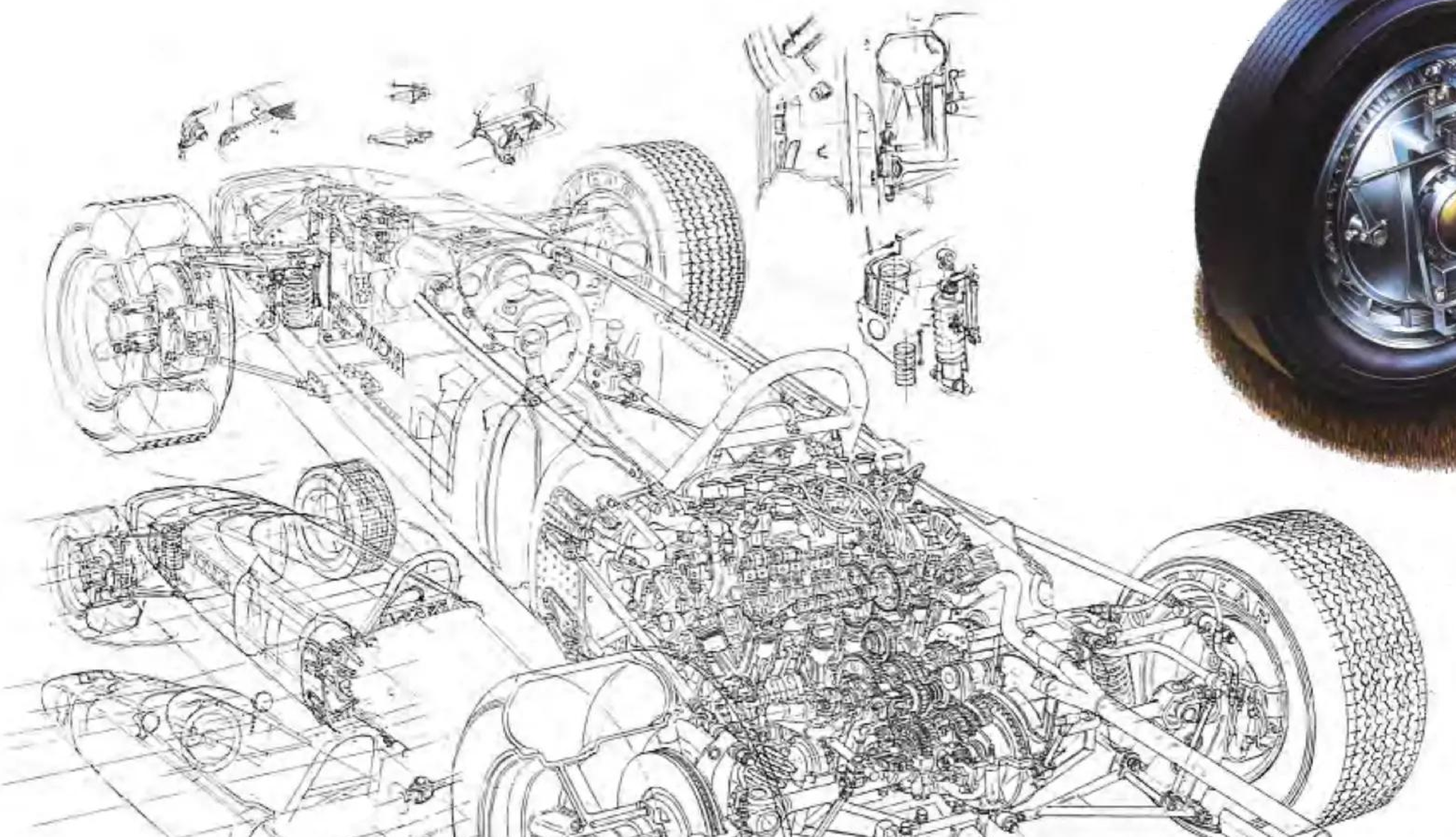
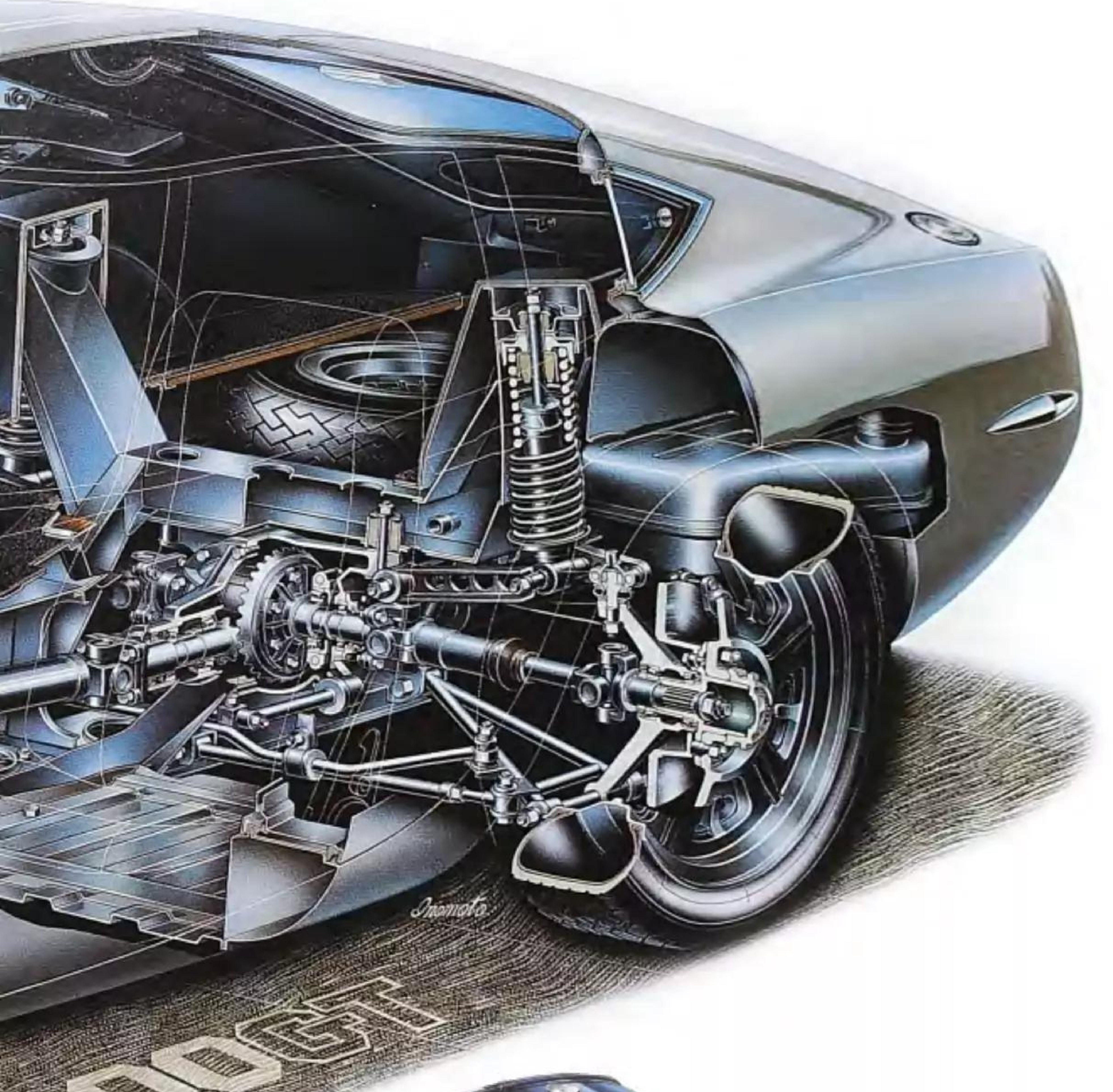


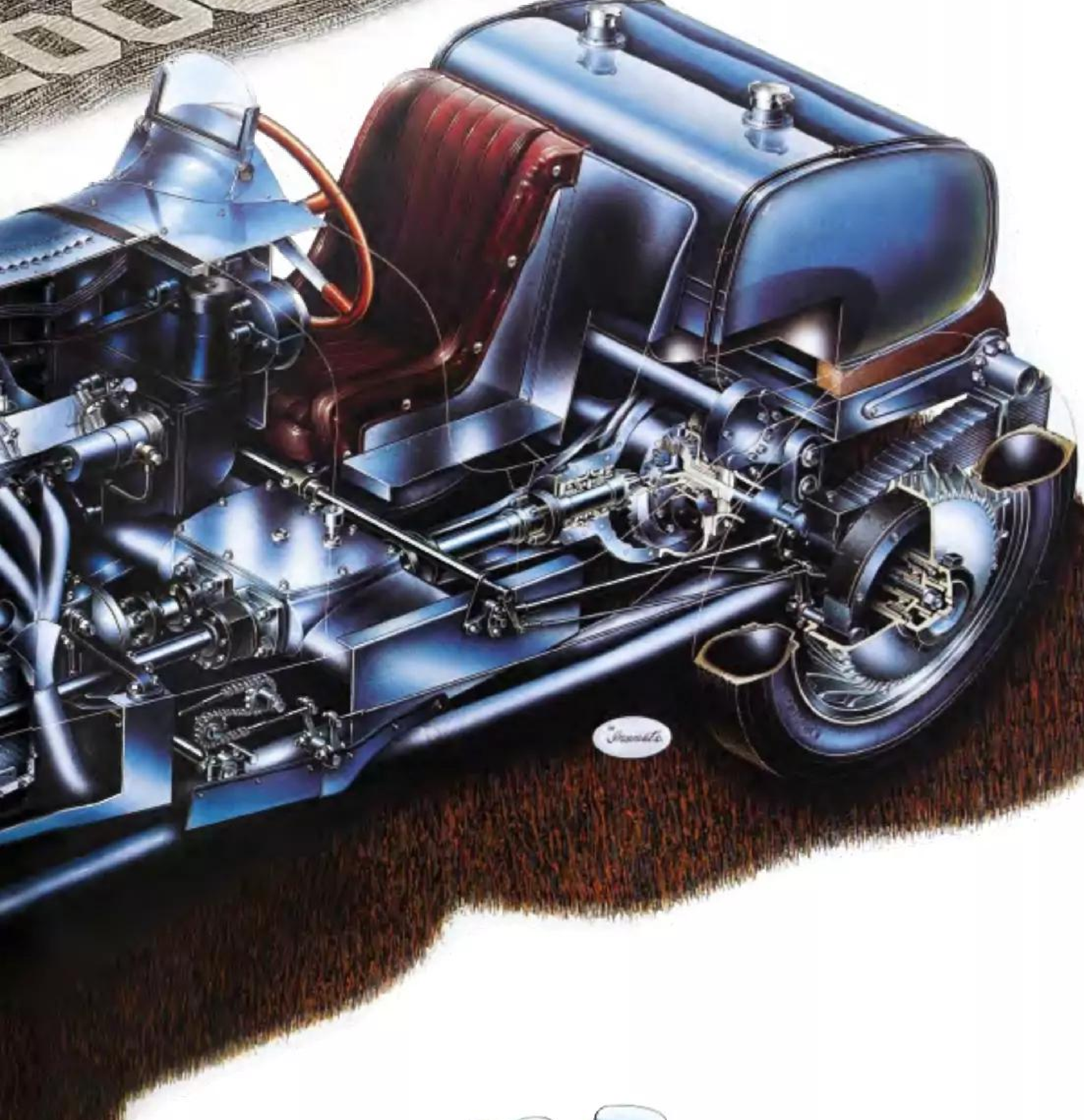
Toyota 2000GT reveals Inomoto's style, with fine ghost lines that highlight body and wheels around the sectioned internals





Above: complex Bugatti T53 4WD. Left: Honda RA272 detail sketches included the transverse, 48-valve, 1.5-litre V12 and six-speed geartrain





YOSHIHIRO INOMOTO

This Japanese master of the art of the cutaway took enthusiasts under the skins of their favourite cars

From Leslie Cresswell to Tony Matthews, the finest exponents of cutaway art have had a distinctive style that makes their illustrations instantly recognisable. Among the greatest of this lost art form is the Japanese master Yoshihiro Inomoto. Without any computer aids, even at the end of his career, this self-taught artist worked in the traditional way, from pencil-sketched reference to a highly detailed finished painting. Be it monochrome ink illustrations or a dense, full-colour artwork, Inomoto clearly understood the engineering he captured.

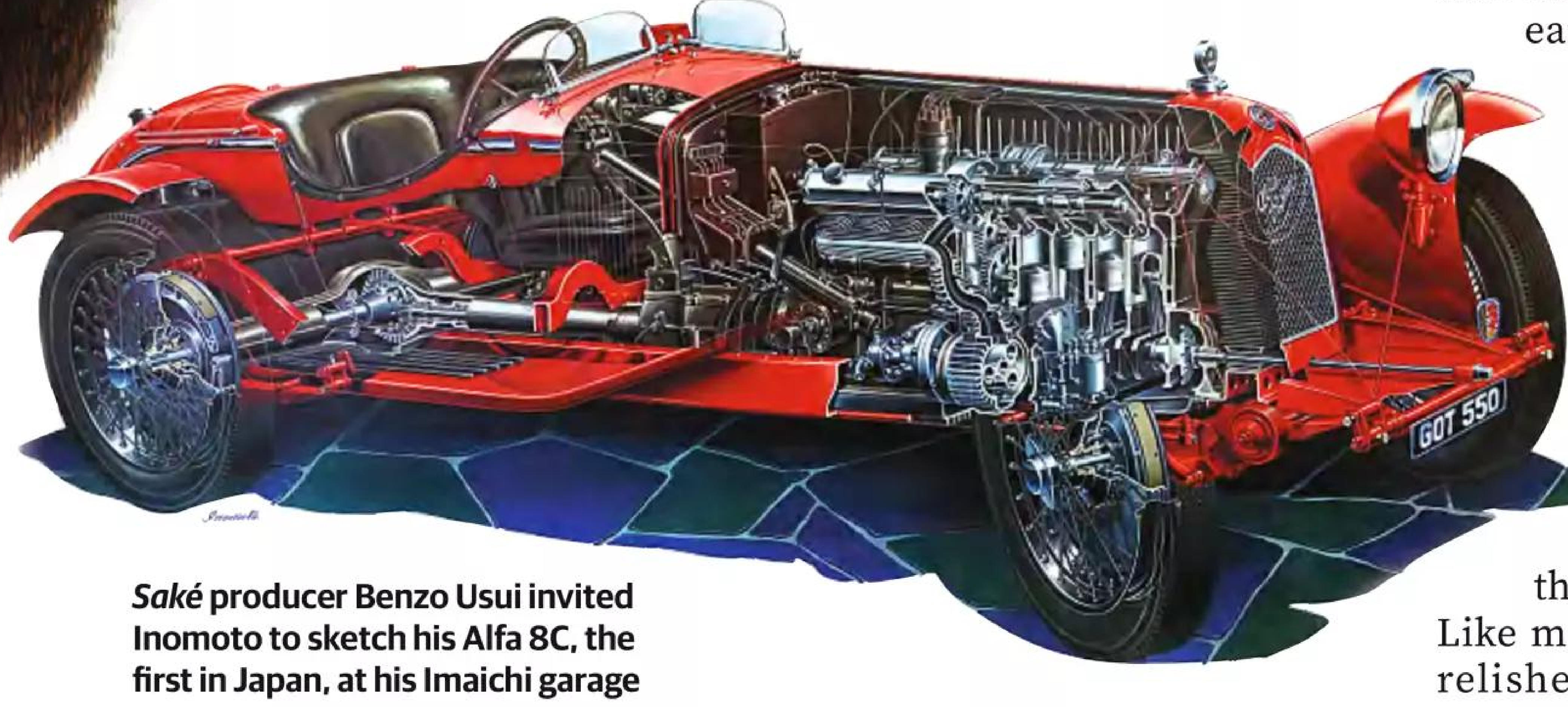
Born in Kumamoto on the island of Kyushu in April 1932, he left school early to teach himself to draw, and inspired by German artists Herbert Schlenzig and Walter Gotschke he signed up for an illustration correspondence course. Japanese manufacturers soon noted Inomoto's talent, and during the 1950s he first worked at Toyo Kogyo (now Mazda) then Nissan; after feeling stifled by advertising work, he eventually went freelance. With limited colour reproduction, Inomoto's early illustrations were beautiful line drawings, and during the early '60s his work started appearing in American magazines including *Automobile Quarterly*.

As well as cutaway art, commissions included ties, Tutima watches, Minolta cameras and even a silk scarf for the launch of the Bugatti EB110. But it was his work for *Road & Track* that made Inomoto's name. Like many cutaway experts, he relished a challenge and was rarely discouraged by the most complex of machines, be it a BRM V16 or a Rolls-Royce Phantom III.

When Honda unveiled the RA272, Inomoto was invited to draw the complicated Formula One challenger. But such was the secrecy around the racer, he soon became frustrated when not given the time to sketch, and gave up on the task. A chance to revisit the legendary F1 car came 18 years later, when *R&T* commissioned him to produce a colour cutaway to accompany Phil Hill's scoop track test. With unlimited access in a Suzuka pit garage and the co-operation of Honda mechanics, he drafted some amazing details. "Yoshi had a unique sensibility that imitators cannot surpass," said Hill. "His fantastic drawings greatly enhanced our story."

Commissions during the '80s for Hill's track tests resulted in some of Inomoto's finest art, and he was clearly honoured to work with the 1961 World Champion. Hill's engineering insight meant he was particularly analytical, and he encouraged the artist to illustrate ever-earlier machines including the 1906 Locomobile 'Old Number 16', then owned by artist Peter Helke, one of Inomoto's heroes.

Throughout his career, Inomoto was tasked by wealthy collectors and his superb work was shown at exhibitions in New York and at the Hillsborough concours. Original pieces rarely come on the market outside Japan, but before he died Inomoto worked with journalist Yuki Motomiya and his friend Brian Long to produce a review of his art. Published by Miki Press in 1999, this 152-page tribute is packed with preparatory sketches and finished masterpieces. **MW**



Saké producer Benzo Usui invited Inomoto to sketch his Alfa 8C, the first in Japan, at his Imaichi garage

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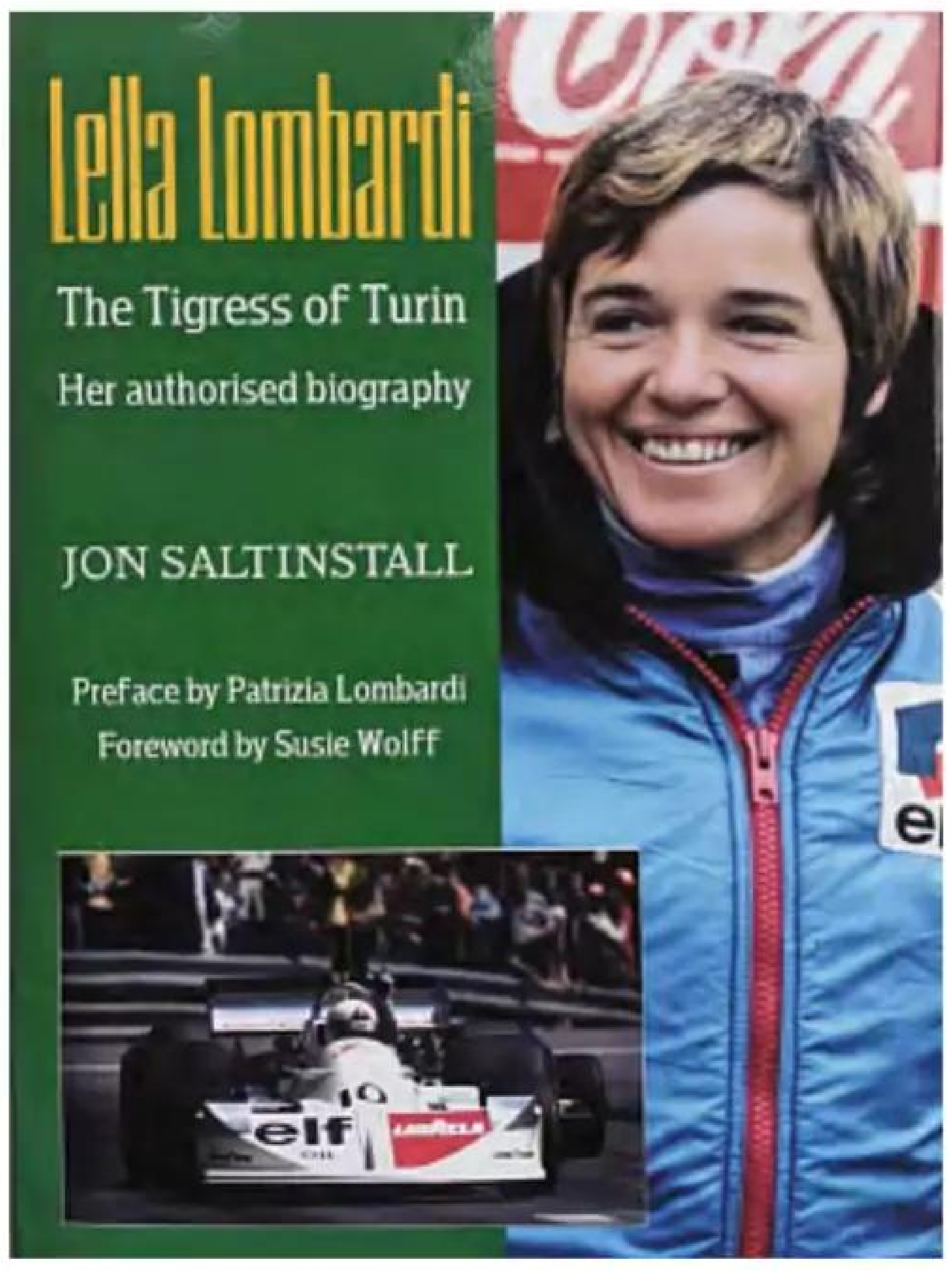
Book of the month

LELLA LOMBARDI: THE TIGRESS OF TURIN



Too often Lella Lombardi's half a point from the tragic 1975 Spanish Grand Prix defines her, but author Jon Saltinstall brilliantly relates a diverse career in this 320-page biography. The modest Lombardi would no doubt have been proud of his efforts, the result of 20 years' research.

From her childhood in Frugarolo with parents who didn't drive, Lombardi developed a love for speed starting with her Lambretta scooter. In a tough, sexist world, her determination powered through the prejudiced challenges of motorsport until cancer cut short her career at just 50.

Those who gave support, such as Count 'Gughi' Zanon, delighted in her success against the odds, and her many visits to the UK inspired a legion of fans. After witnessing her impressive drive in the Formula Three support race for the Monaco Grand Prix, where in qualifying she beat a group of future Formula One stars including Alan Jones, promoter John Webb knew Lombardi was special and lined her up for a Formula 5000 drive in a ShellSport-Luxembourg Lola T330. The 500bhp behemoth was not an easy car, but from her first race at a wet Brands Hatch she impressed with fourth against vastly more experienced rivals.

> *'From her first Formula 5000 race at a wet Brands Hatch she impressed, with fourth against vastly more experienced rivals'*

Although most competitors had no problem competing against the popular Italian, Graham Hill was determined that no woman would beat him in front of his home crowd after being outqualified by Lombardi's March at the '75 BRDC International Trophy at Silverstone. Lombardi soon caught Hill after clutch problems delayed her start, but the veteran refused to let her past despite the blue flags. After the race she stormed into the garage to grab a spanner, but thankfully her equally furious crew restrained this rare outburst.

Gaining the respect of teams was initially a challenge, as confirmed with the F1 March. When Lombardi reported the 741's evil, snap-oversteer handling, the mechanics listened to teammate Vittorio Brambilla and dismissed her views. Only when her replacement, Ronnie Peterson, found the balance tricky and demanded a new monocoque was a cracked bulkhead discovered. This superb biography is full of such fascinating insights, all accompanied by quotes from key personnel.

Lombardi raced an amazing range of machinery, from F875 CRM to a NASCAR Chevrolet Laguna, which she joked "needed a ladder to get in". Big-bangers never fazed her, as she proved with the brutal Luigi Racing 490bhp, 5.7-litre Chevy Camaro that, shared with Anna Cambiaghi, was a feature of the 1981 European Touring Car Championship.

Lombardi's impressive technical knowledge always eventually earned the respect of engineers. The championship success of the Jolly Club's Alfa Romeo GTV6 was down to her fine-tuning, and even after being diagnosed with cancer she was determined to sort the newly launched 75 V6.

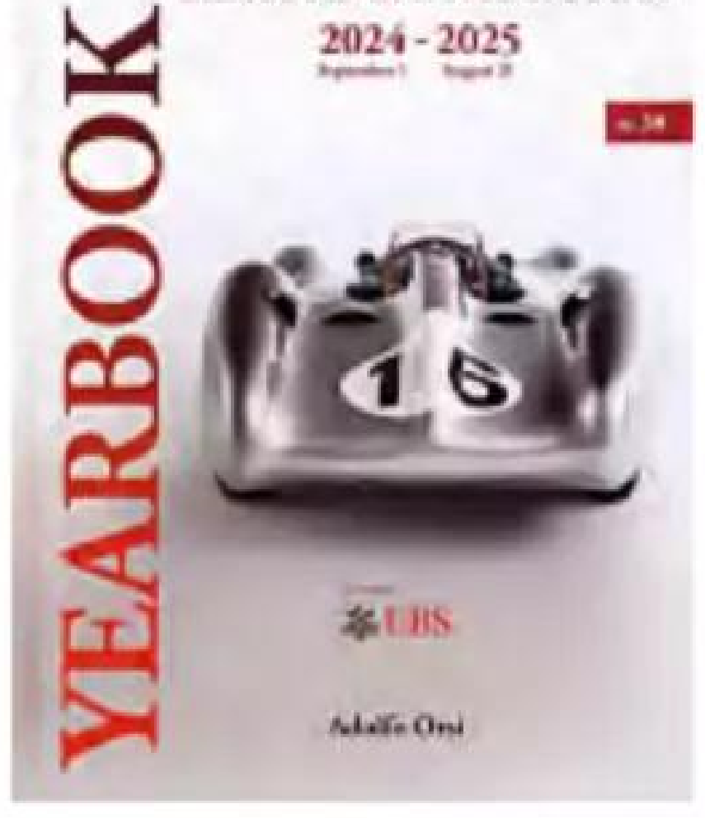
Saltinstall's lengthy acknowledgements confirm his impressive research, with Lombardi's family and friends supporting the project with stories and previously unpublished photographs. Only the comprehensive but cramped 18-page results table frustrates in a superb book that is sure to garner more awards for the author. **MW**

***£40** Jon Saltinstall, Douglas Loveridge Publications. ISBN 9781900113243*

1971

Following six previous titles covering 1965-'70, photographer-turned-sculptor Manou Zurini and journalist Alain Pernot have dug deep in the DPPI archive for this stylish focus on 1971. Across 336 beautifully printed pages, this vivid title features 450 cracking shots, including 200 colour images, covering the full range of motorsport from Formula One to autocross. The driver studies are superbly framed, exemplified by a shot of Emerson Fittipaldi chatting with Reine Wisell in the early morning light at Kyalami. **MW**

***€129** Manou Zurini and Alain Pernot, Editions Cercle d'Art. ISBN 9782702211434*



Classic Car Auction Yearbook

More data than ever pours into this annual round-up, now including sub-$100k online sales. Upbeat notes from auction houses make the most of younger demographics and total turnover being 2% up this year to $2.1bn, but author Adolfo Orsi strikes a cautious tone. There are fascinating insights, such as how Countach prices are taking a dip as Miuras climb, and while pre-war models now account for 6.16% of the market, pre-1918 cars enjoyed the peak sell-through rate, at 83%. **AM**

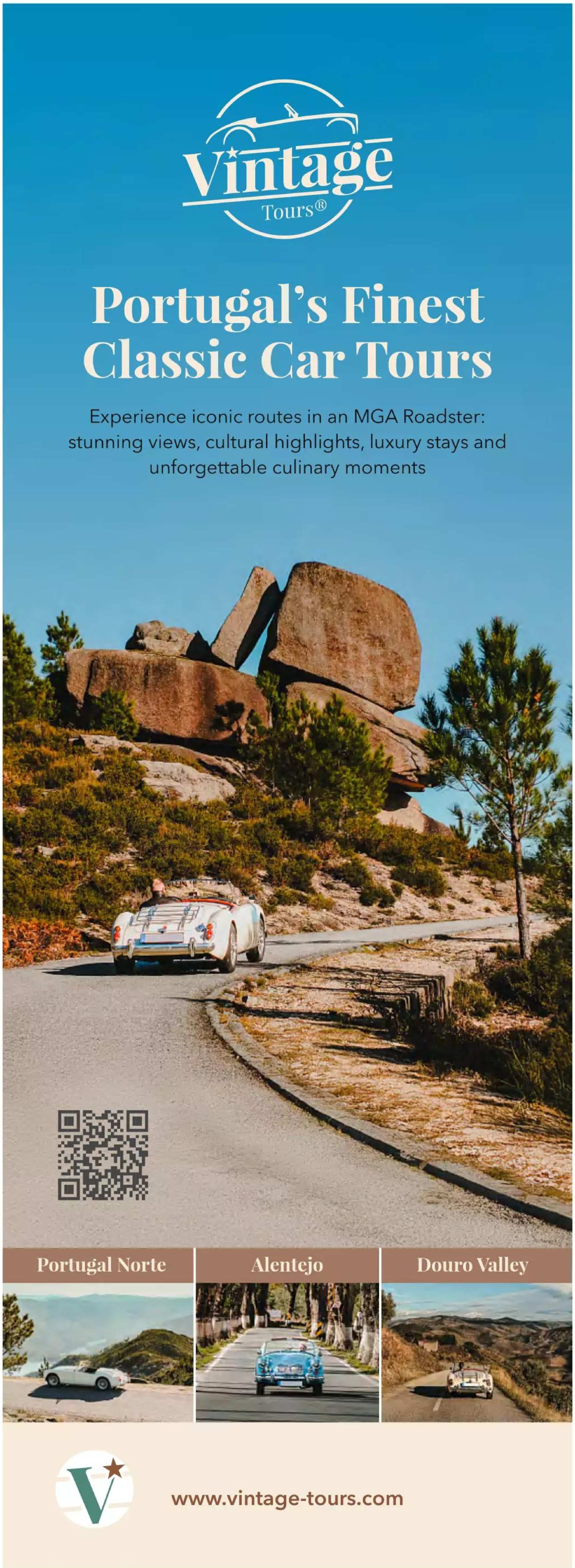
***€100** Adolfo Orsi, Historica Selecta. ISBN 9788896232170*

FORD
FIESTA
MARK BRADBURY

Ford Fiesta

As a classic enthusiast, I'd have preferred to see a Mk1 Supersport or similar on the front cover, although the Mikko Hirvonen/Jarmo Lehtinen WRC car on the back ups the ante and there is much to enjoy about this book. The sadly departed Fiesta was a quiet revolutionary and, while you can't be encyclopaedic in 96 pages, author Mark Bradbury packs a lot in while keeping the story readable. Images including press photographs, period advertising, and concept and development cars are among the highlights, supported by informative text. **LP**

***£15.99** Mark Bradbury, Amberley Publishing. ISBN 9781398123830*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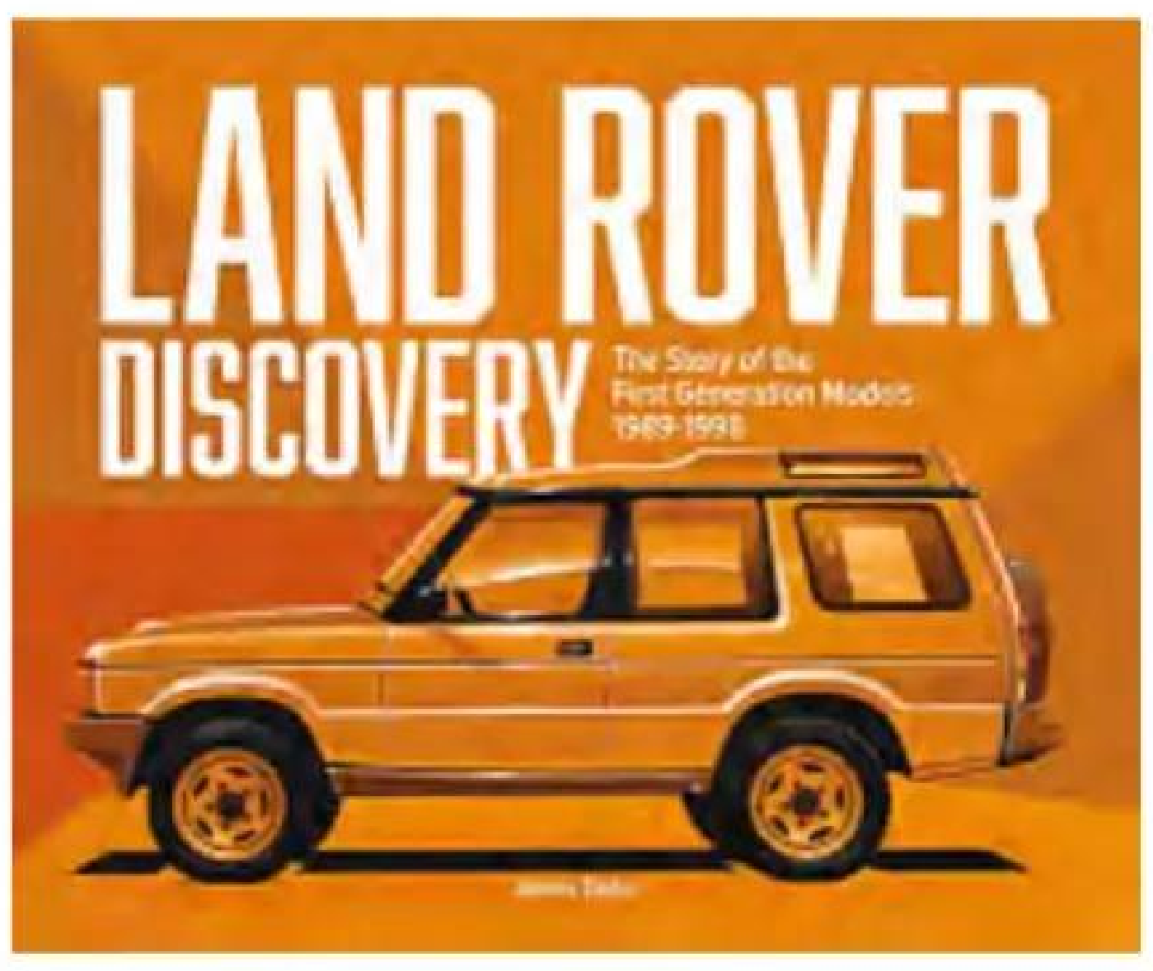
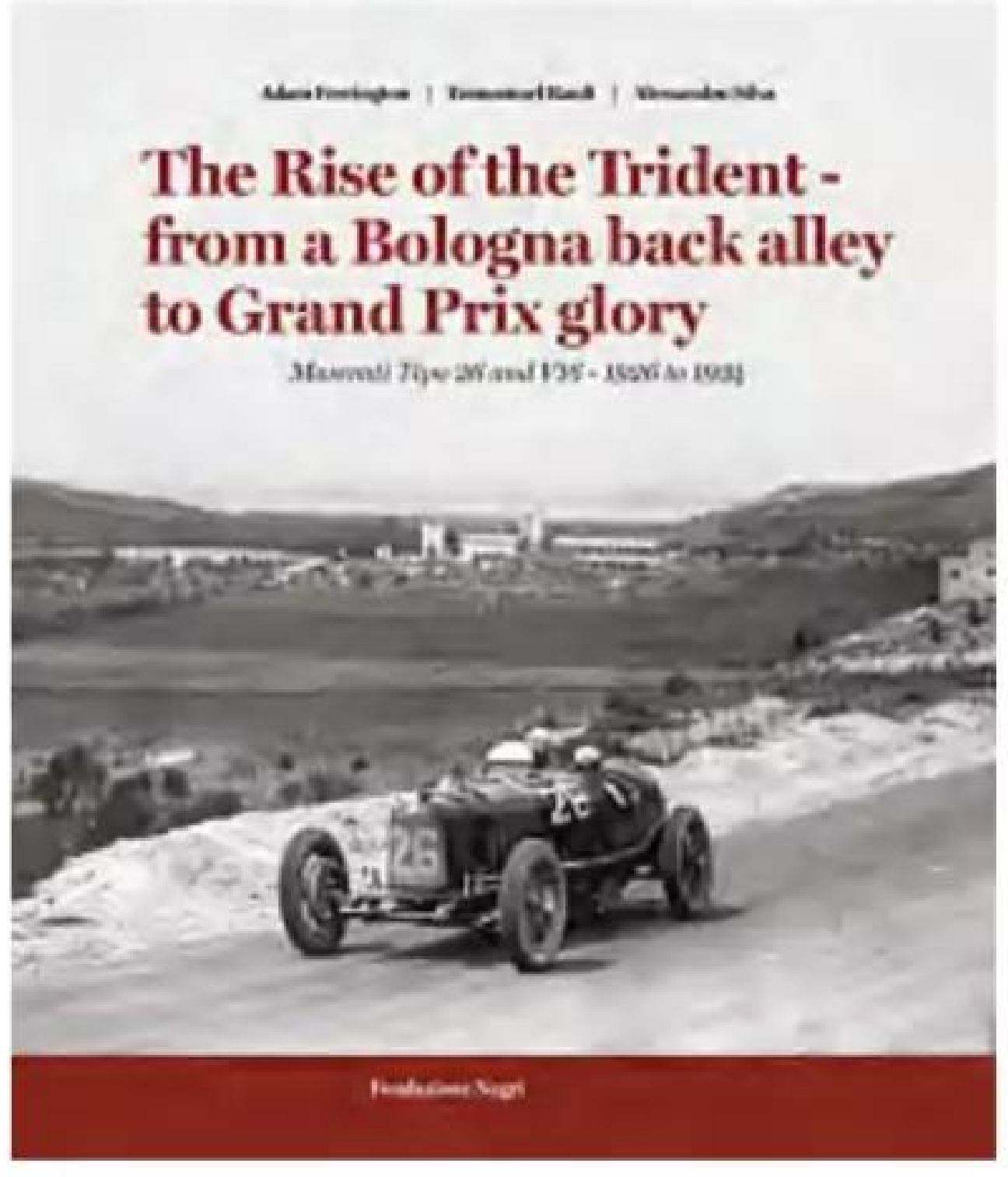


Land Rover Discovery

Another stellar effort from prolific British industry specialist author James Taylor, this book is full of original research following hours of combing through archives and stuffed with photography most will never have seen before. It does pretty much what it promises on the cover, detailing the development of the Discovery, but also the life it led after its 1989 release. That includes its major midlife facelift, publicity events including the famous Camel Trophy, special-bodied variants and even an encyclopaedic breakdown of foreign, limited-run models. We didn't need to know that Belgium got its own special edition called the K1 Britannia, but it's reassuring that knowledge isn't lost to history as it otherwise surely would have been.

Going into greater detail than the same author's 25th-anniversary effort that covered all generations of the Discovery, this has instantly become the definitive book on the model and the production values are excellent for the relatively affordable price. **CC**

***£35** James Taylor, Veloce. ISBN 9781836440390*


The Rise of the Trident - from a Bologna back alley to Grand Prix glory
Fondazione Negri

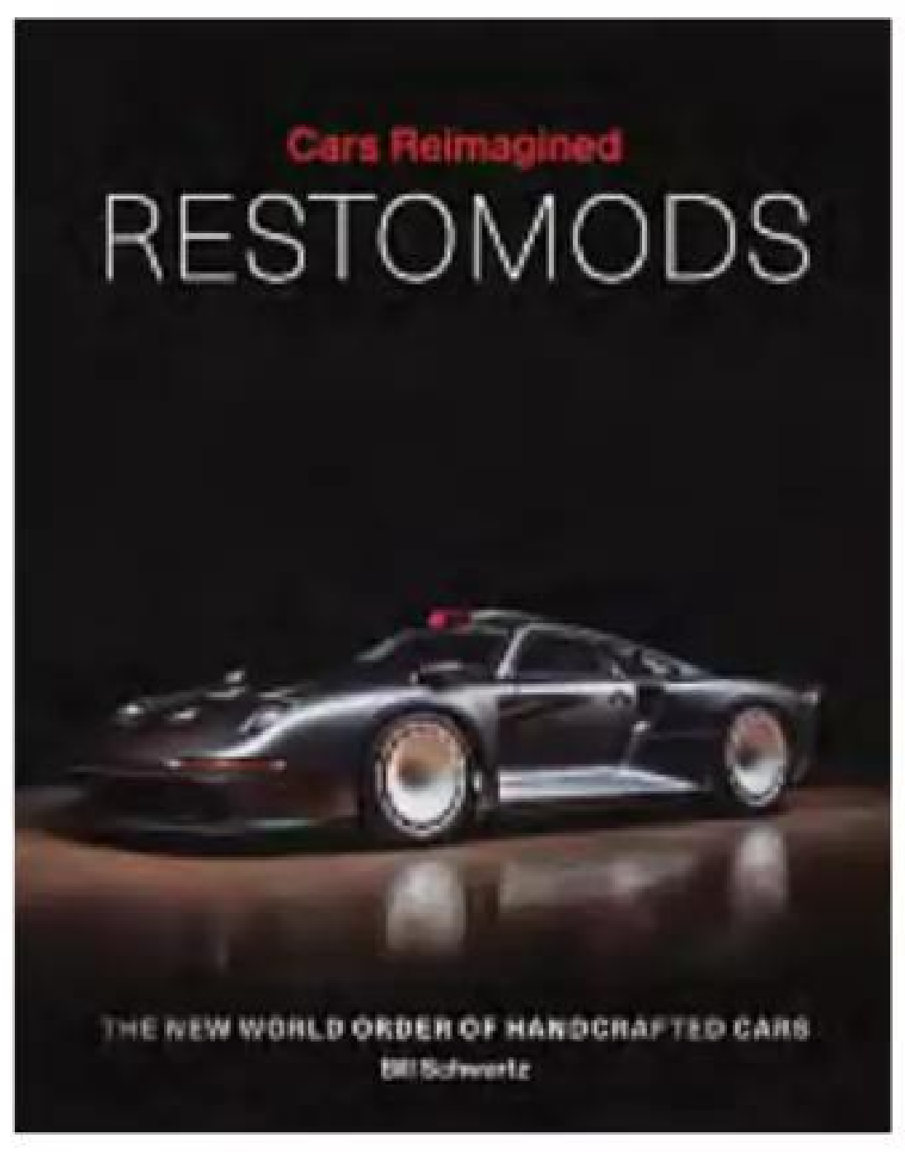
The Rise of the Trident

With Maserati's centenary next year, this impressive history of its earliest cars is timely. Following the format of publisher Negri's sell-out *voiturette* tome, the Anglo-Italian team tackles 1926-'34 in this 308-pager, from the Diatto-powered cars to the V16 titans.

Following an introduction by Peter Shaw, restorer of many Tipo 26Ms, the first chapter gives the background and evolution up to Alfieri Maserati's death from complications after an operation. Then follow year-by-year reviews, the style matching the previous *voiturette* book with details of each chassis with race appearances and fascinating biographies.

This is no dry record, because the racing stories and lives of the characters involved are colourful. A wealth of historic photographs complements the stories, including various specials and exotic road cars, and the final 14-page section details the various specifications. With full English text, this definitive history is almost guaranteed to sell out quickly, but what a shame no index was provided. **MW**

***€180** Adam Ferrington, Emmanuel Rault, and Alessandro Silva, Fondazione Negri (negri.it)*

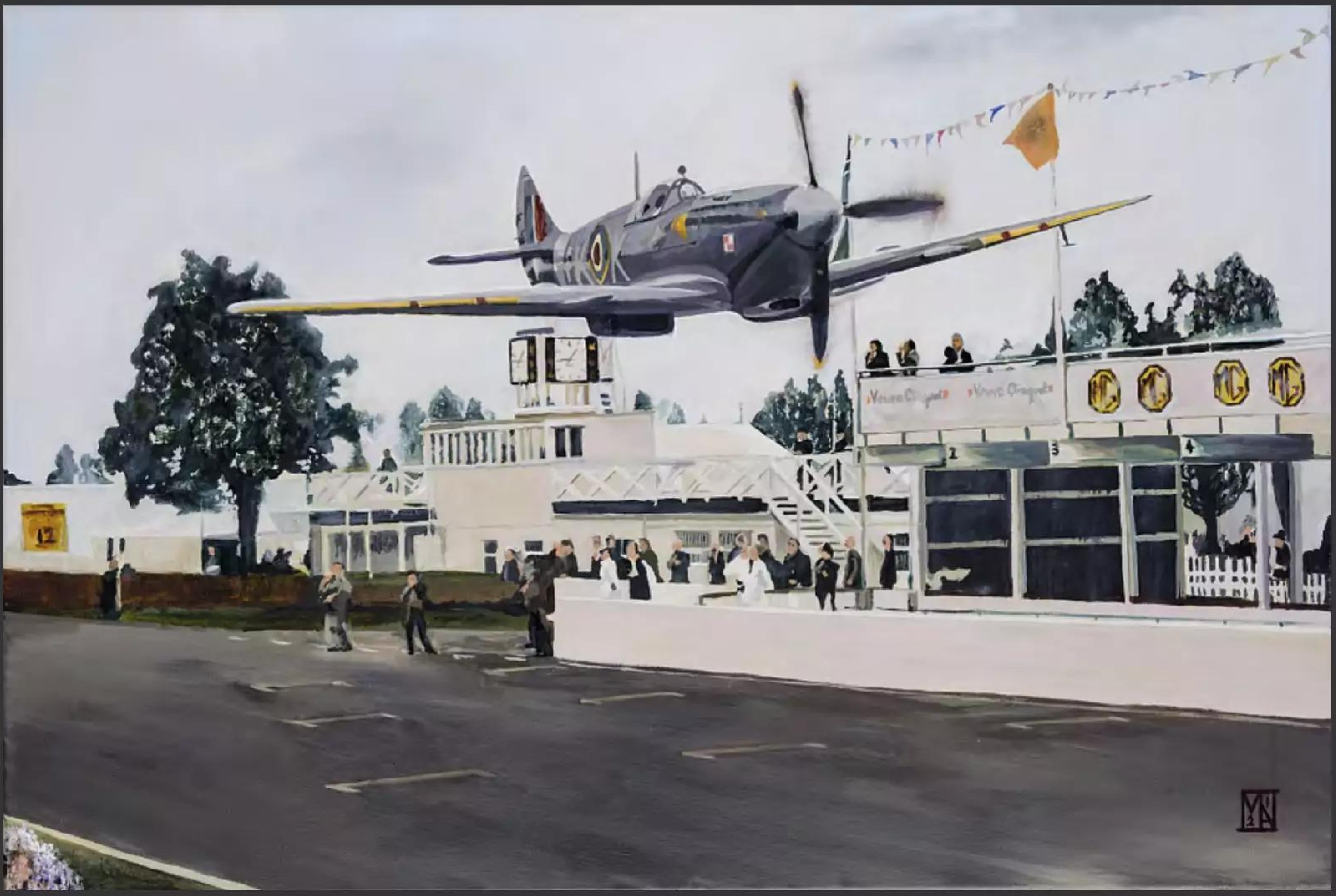


Cars Reimagined: Restomods

Fancy a 'new' Bentley Speed Six? How about an electrified Ford Bronco? Or an 'outlaw' Lancia Aurelia B20GT? If you can dream it, there's probably a restomod company that makes it. Bill Schwartz's well-researched, 324-page hardback is a fascinating *Who's who* of the industry, filled with 55 of the scene's biggest movers and shakers – you'll know your Revology from your Zero Labs in no time. Unsurprisingly, 13 of them focus on Porsches, the darling of the movement, but Schwartz also explores the firms turning classics into battery-powered vehicles, the well-known marques making continuation models (such as Jaguar's 2018 D-type) and those who are reviving old names. Each entry is accompanied by a small factfile, a biography, and quotes from owners, founders and CEOs. There are plenty of high-quality images and full-spread press shots, although a few more behind-the-scenes snaps would be nice. Still, it's a great insight into this booming sector of the classic car industry. **RS**

***£65** Bill Schwartz, ACC Art Books. ISBN 9781788843379*

www.Martin Allen.art



“Ray Hanna, Goodwood 1998”

Captured forever in oil by artist Martin Allen.

In 1998, at the first Goodwood Revival, history was written in the roar of a Merlin engine. The legendary Ray Hanna brought the crowd to stunned silence as he guided his Spitfire down the pit straight below the height of the grandstands — a display of audacity and precision that has never been repeated, and never forgotten.

Martin Allen’s ‘*Ray Hanna, Goodwood 98*’ immortalises that defining moment in oil — the gleam of the aircraft, the flash of the pit lane, the thrill of impossible mastery.

Now offered as a limited-edition A2 fine-art print, each piece is hand-signed, numbered, and embossed with the artist’s studio seal.

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For collectors of art, aviation, or motorsport heritage, this is more than a print - it’s a piece of Goodwood legend. Own the moment when courage and craft converged in perfect harmony. Secure your edition before the final prints are gone.

Martin Allen is a London-based artist, member of the GRRC and the Guild of Motoring Artists. His work has been exhibited many times at Goodwood, Salon Privé, Escapade Silverstone and The Affordable Art Fair.

To acquire your piece of motorsport history, visit www.martinallen.art

To commission your own painting email:

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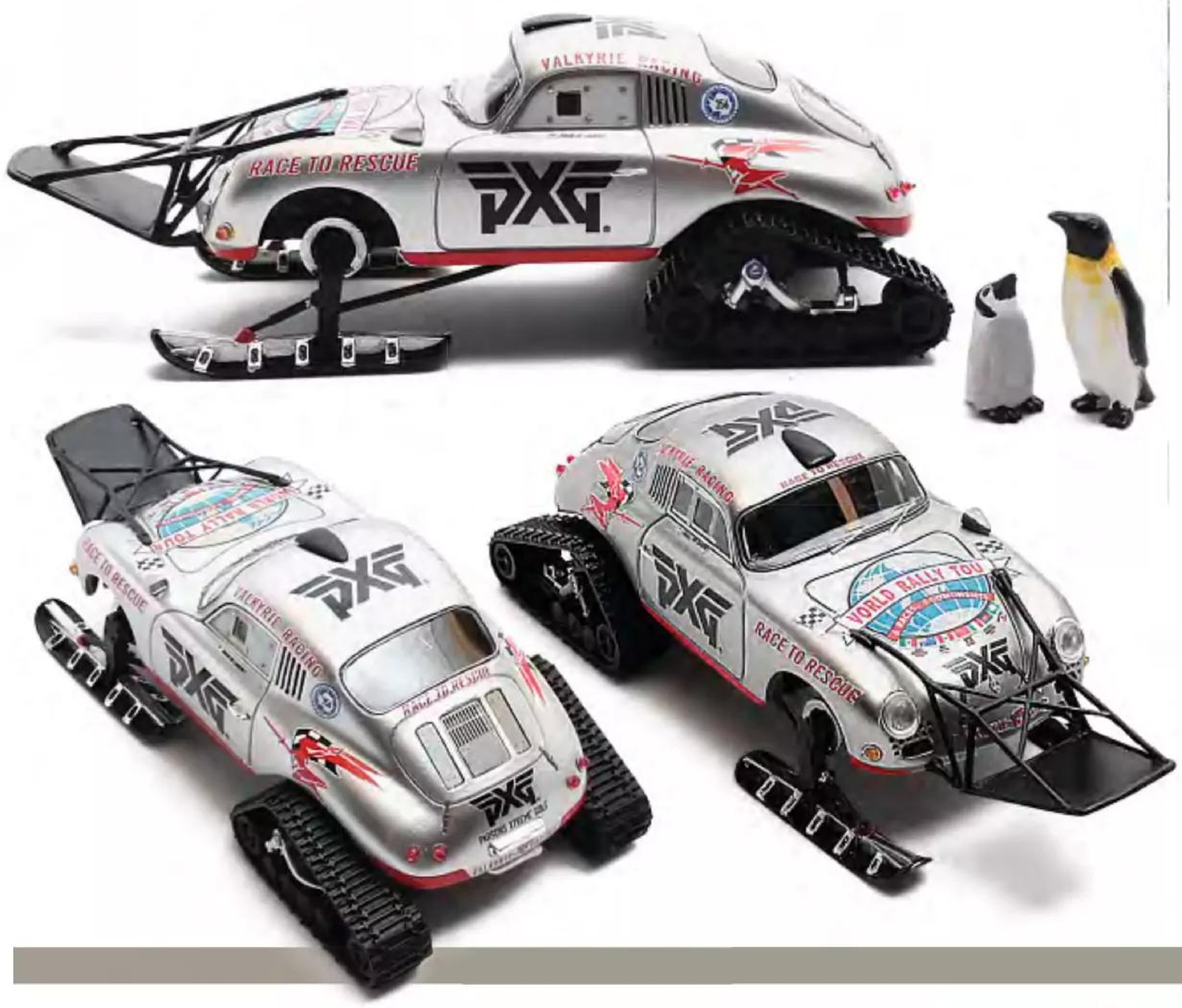
Model of the month



PORSCHE 356A POLAR CHALLENGE

Matrix, 1:43, £127.99

The impressive exploits of Renée Brinkerhoff's Porsche 356, competing across seven continents to raise awareness of child trafficking, climaxed in December 2021 with a trip to Antarctica. For the extreme challenge, the 1956 coupé was modified by UK-based design engineer Kieron Bradley, which resulted in a dramatic vehicle featuring both skis and tracks. "The skis not only looked great, but also increased flotation by 300% compared to an Antarctic 4x4," claimed Bradley.

Brinkerhoff teamed up with explorer Jason de Carteret and the extraordinary 356 headed towards the South Pole. Despite problems with fuel drops, freezing air filters and broken hub bolts, the pair covered 356 miles in extreme –40°C conditions and came close to Brinkerhoff's charity target of $1million. The Valkyrie Racing Porsche snowmobile makes a fantastic model subject, as Matrix has proved. To add character the miniature comes with parent and chick penguin figures.

1:18

1 Werk83's 1967 Daytona 24 Hours Ferrari 330 P3 Spider, £91.99
2 Solido's 1985 Renault 5 GT Turbo Mk1, £54.99
3 Solido's 1984 BMW 635CSi, £54.99
4 KK-Scale's 1966 Ford Thunderbird Hardtop Coupe, £96.99

1:43

5 Spark's 1981 Spa 24 Hours Mazda RX-7, £74.99
6 Kess' 1927 Alfa Romeo RL Super Sport, £111.99
7 Spark's 2022 Aston Martin Valkyrie AMR Pro, £69.99
8 Kess' 1972 Alfa Romeo Spider Pininfarina, £111.99
9 Spark's Graham Hill 1968 Spanish GP Lotus 49, £69.99
10 Kess' 1936 Bugatti Type 57 Labourdette Vutotal Coupé, £111.99
11 Matrix's 1971 Citroën DS21 Grand Palais coupé, £127.99
12 Kess' 1947 Isotta Fraschini 8C Monterosa coupé, £112.99
13 Matrix's 1966 Jaguar E-type Frua roadster, £118.99

Edited by Mick Walsh. Unless stated, all items are available from Diecast Legends (01483 407555; diecastlegends.com); 10% discount for orders from C&SC readers quoting 'CS126'

1

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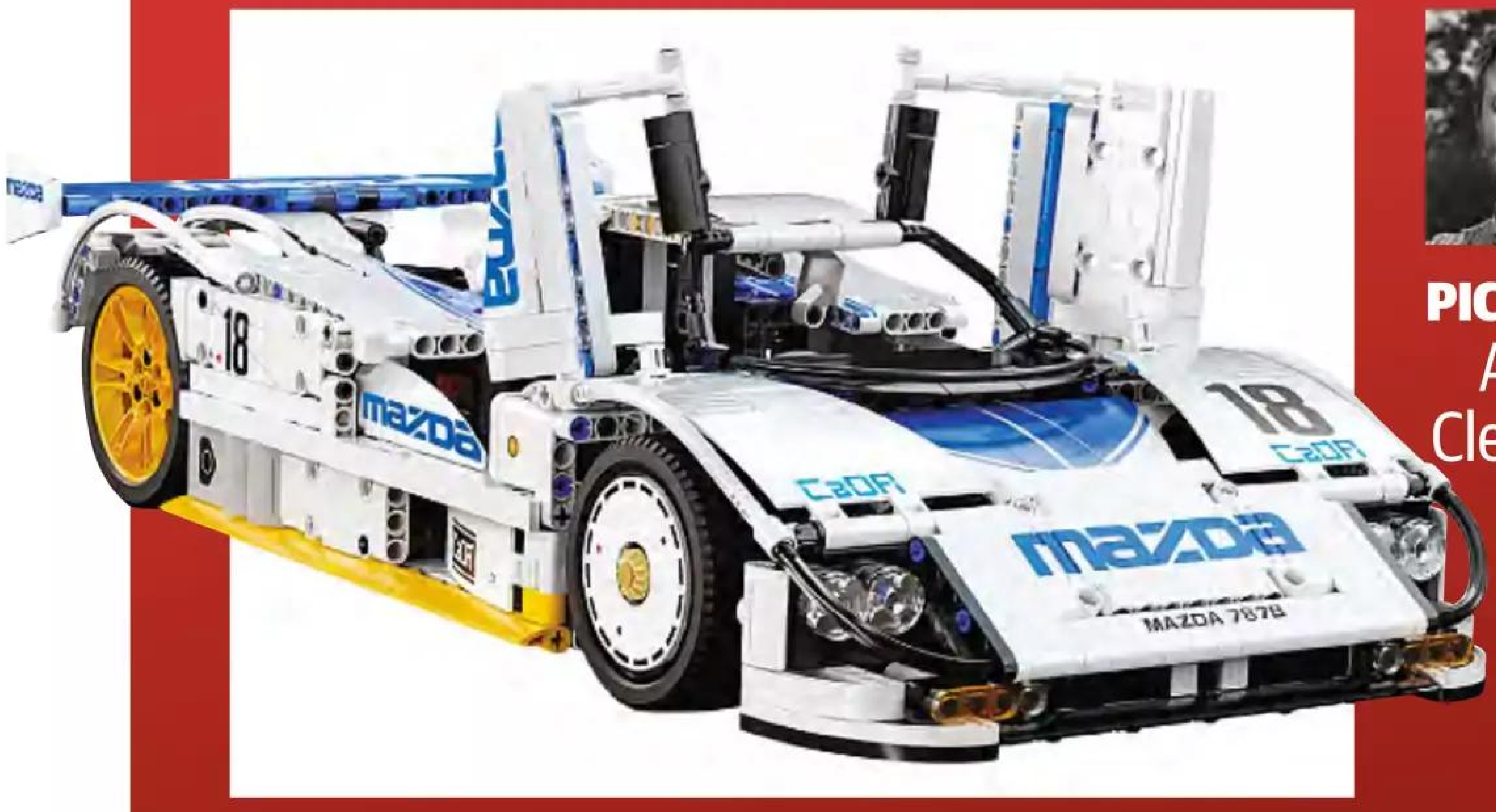
All I want for Christmas...

Members of the *C&SC* team choose the automotive gifts they are hoping to find nestling under the tree this year



PICKED BY
Alastair Clements

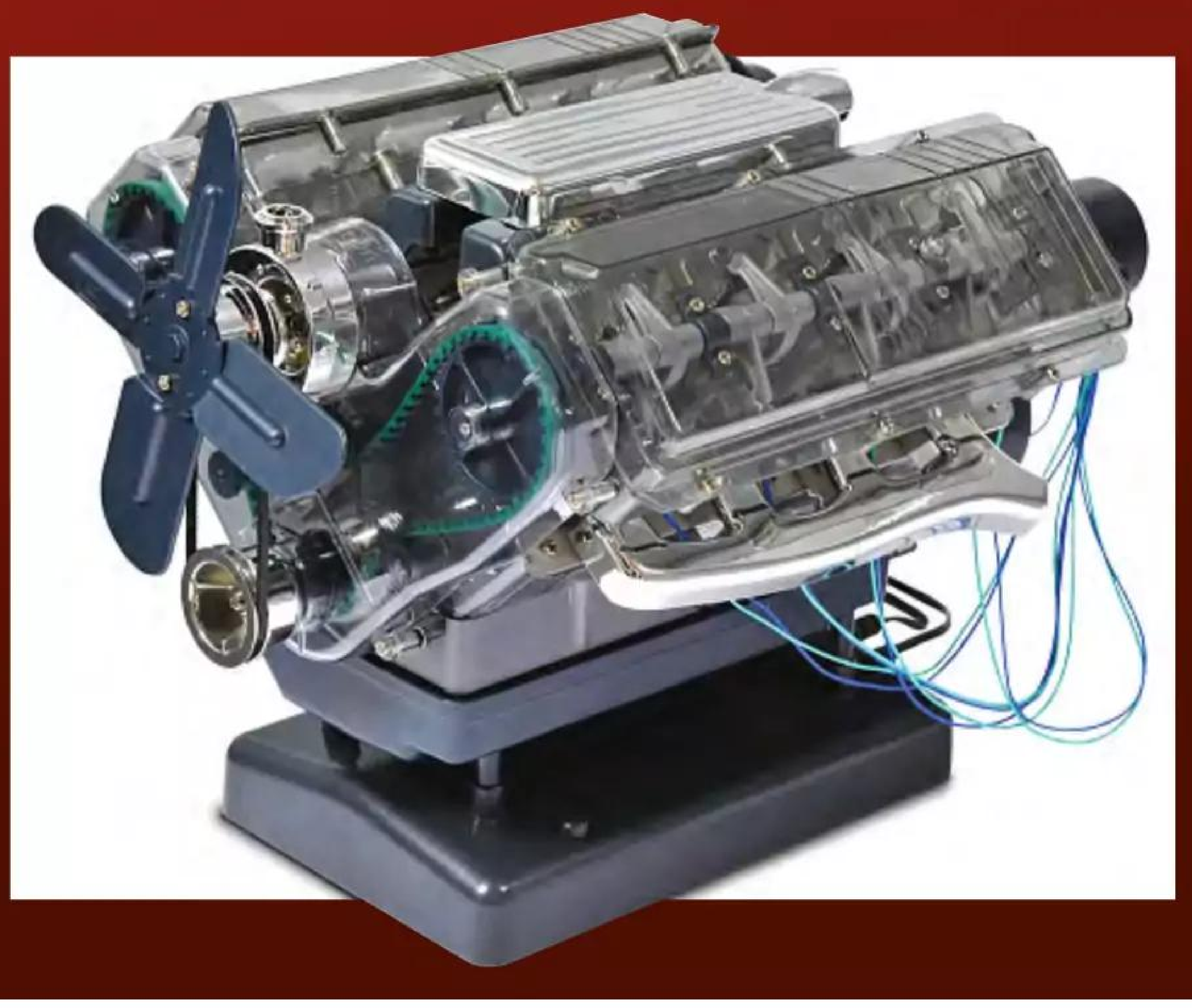
CaDA Mazda 787B

Such is my obsession with Lego, I'm running out of classic subjects to buy – and the prices of the larger sets make them an ambitious item for the Christmas list – so the emergence of near-facsimile CaDA has been a godsend. The catalogue has recently expanded with a 1:24 Shelby Mustang GT350H and this Mazda sports-racer (set no C63007W), which lends itself particularly well to being modelled in bricks. At £99.99 it's great value for a huge, 1:10-scale model, and with 1797 pieces it should keep me quiet until New Year's Day. Superb detailing includes a four-rotor engine, and for an extra £49.99 you can turn it into a radio-controlled car with a rechargable RC upgrade kit. It's already an officially licensed product, so I'd love to see a version in 1991 Le Mans-winning livery.
wonderlandmodels.com

Build Your Own V8 Engine

If you're an in-the-kitchen-at-parties type, any distraction in the season of commercialised family time is a lifeline. The eager wait for an Airfix kit to ruin by snapping it together before you are ready appears not to be a 'thing' any more, but building your own engine on the table? Bring it on! There are lots of kits in varying degrees of complexity, realism and cost – you can even get a baby small-block Chevy that runs on real petrol – but I like the Haynes offering of an old-school V8 that's not so tiny or complex it'll make you give up in frustration. It's built in transparent casings, so it's educational, too; add three AA batteries and it cycles, with 'firing' plugs. It's not cheap, but it promises hours of entertainment and £67 is way less than I spent last time I built an engine in the kitchen…
haynesmuseumshop.org

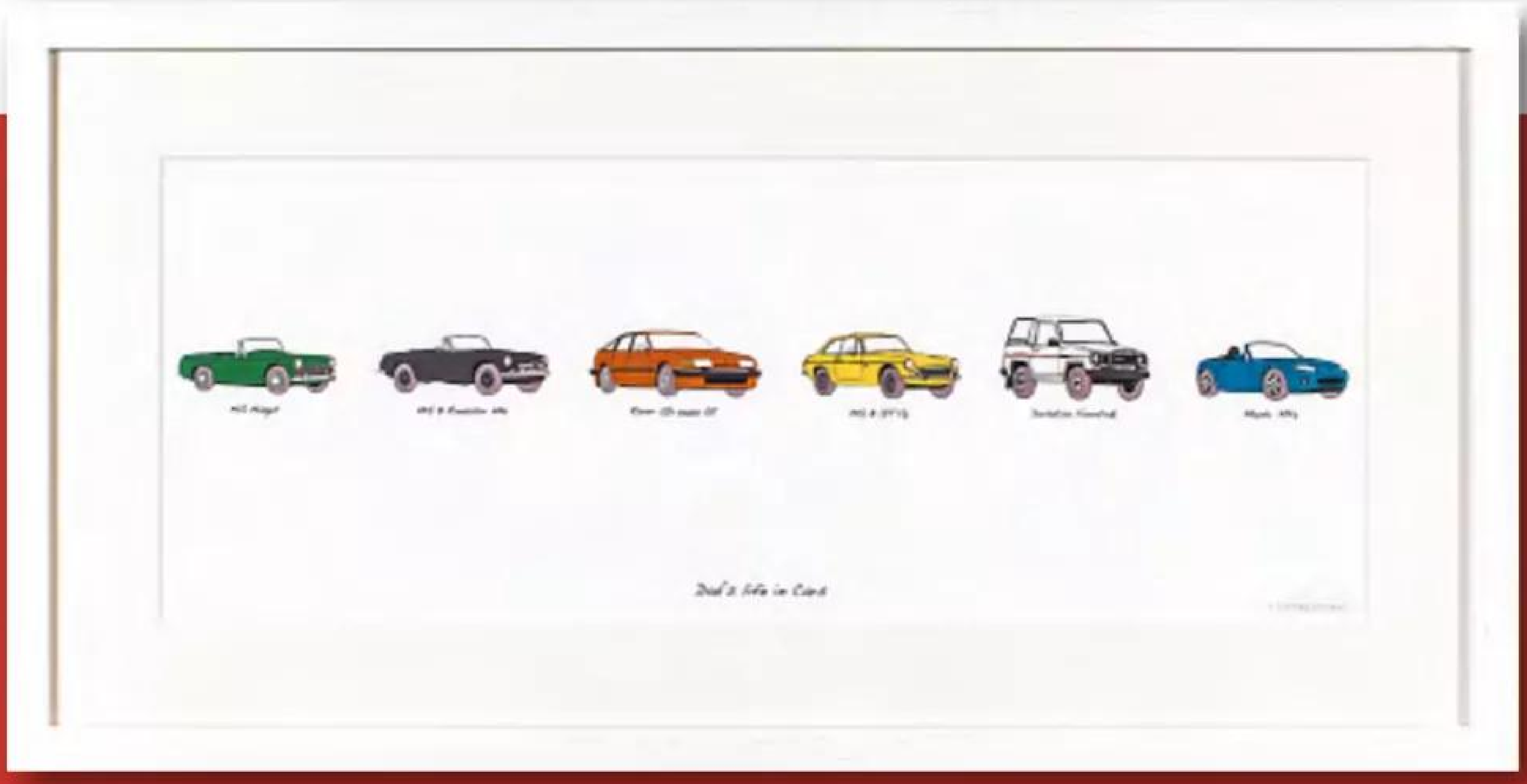
PICKED BY
Paul Hardiman

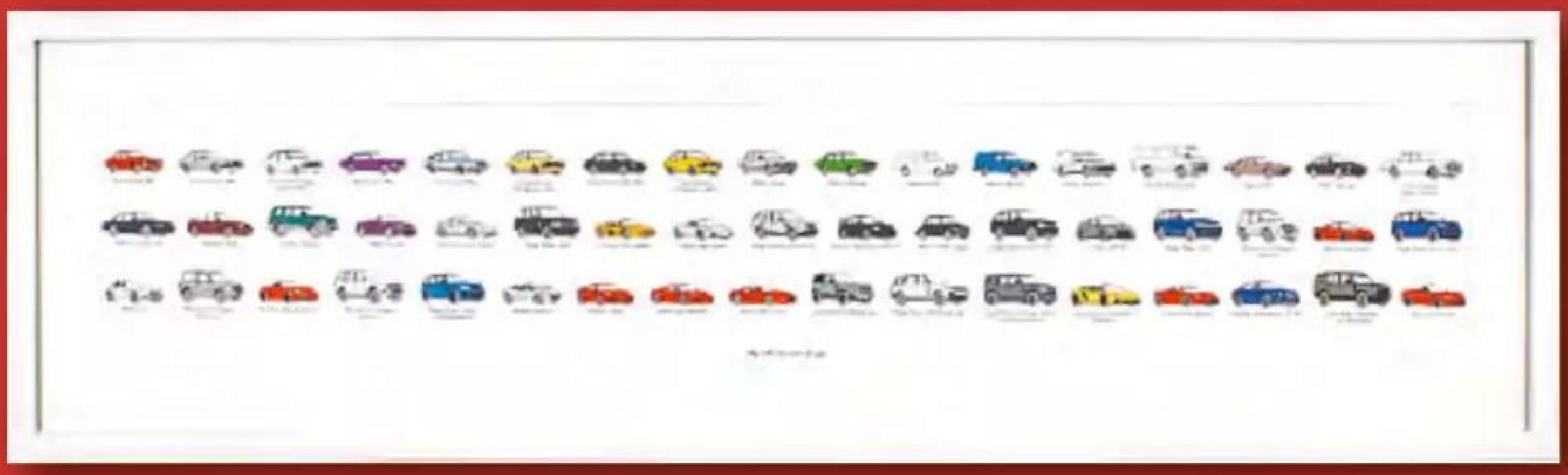


PICKED BY Aaron McKay

QuickJack car lift

Getting a car up in the air in 30 secs, secure and without damaging the sills, a hydraulic lift such as this would be a game-changer. If I didn't have to faff around with a trolley jack and axle stands, I'd much sooner tackle tasks underneath – which is most of them. QuickJacks start with this 3500SLX (rated to 3500lb) at £1561.50, which looks like the perfect hobbyist's equivalent to a professional four-post lift. Not only is it low-profile enough when not in use to slip under the Christmas tree, but it also comprises two separate platforms that allow access to the centre of the car, and can be operated via a car battery as well as the mains.
liftmasterltd.com

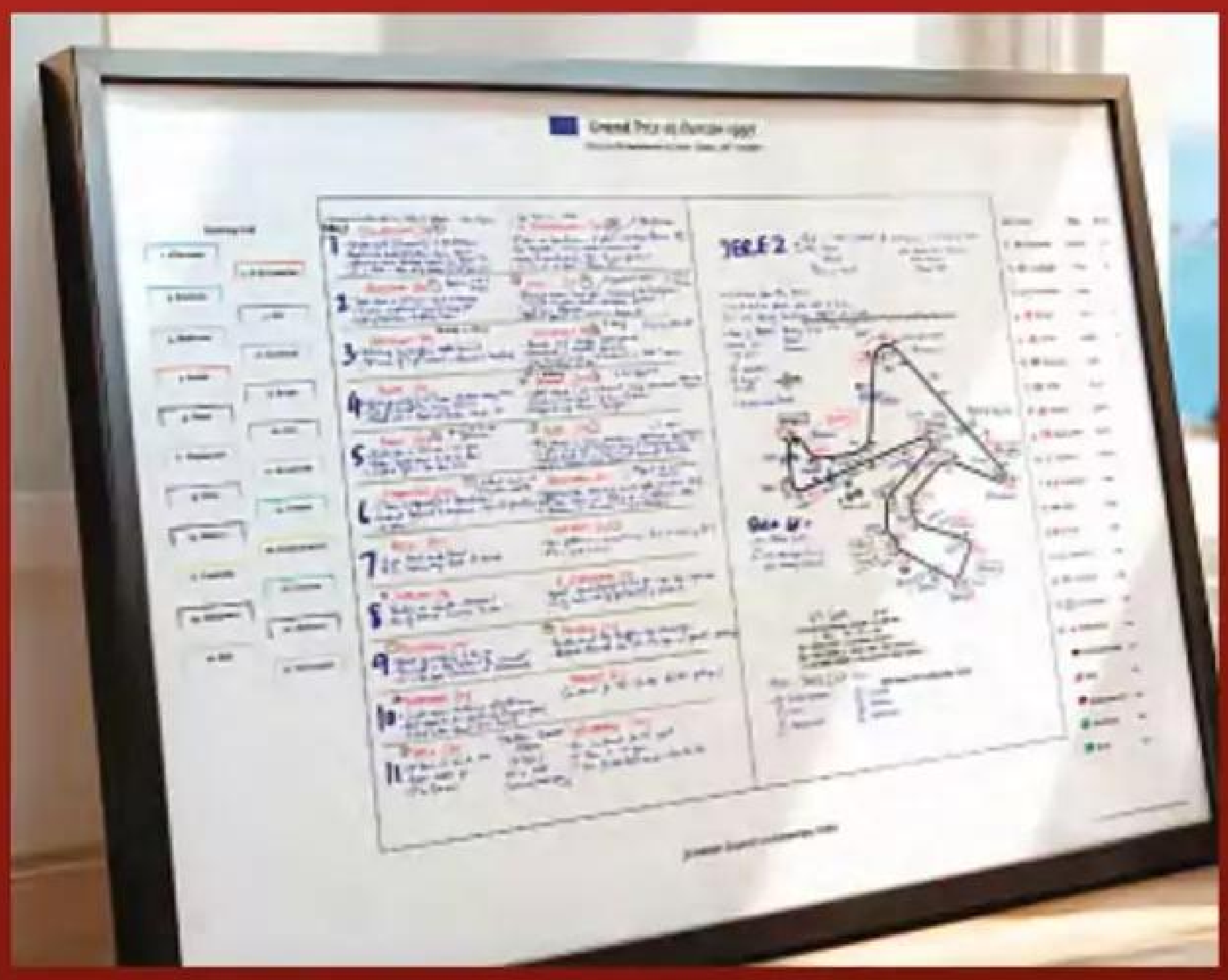




PICKED BY Simon Hucknall

YourLifeInCars artwork

I'm not much of an ephemera collector. Other than books for research and a few framed photos of highlights from this line of work, my life is devoid of car-related trinkets. But I've recently delved into the archive and found some faded, dog-eared snaps of the cars I've owned since my teens, and YourLifeInCars sprang to mind. Graphic artist Oliver Hydes will immortalise your car history – or 'Carvolution' – in a bespoke work, with anything from one to 80 cars, each hand-drawn and personalised. Prices start from £165.
yourlifeincars.com



PICKED BY Ryan Standen

Formula One commentary notes

Drivers are the obvious stars of F1, but it's the commentators who lodge the sport's most iconic moments in our minds with their one-liners, heartfelt reactions and unforgettable slip-ups. The Sports Commentators reproduces handwritten commentary notes from David Croft, Harry Benjamin, Jonathan Legard and Ben Edwards. They're a fascinating insight into how these unsung heroes prepare for races. You can choose from Legard's scribbles for the 1997 European Grand Prix, Crofty's jottings before 2021's Abu Dhabi finale or this year's special-edition Silverstone print, which pairs Croft's 2025 race notes with a list of every driver who has won at the Northamptonshire circuit. There are hundreds more in the firm's archives, priced from £35-175.
thesportscommentators.com

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Unwrap happiness this Christmas with Scalextric

Scalextric sets have been a must-have Christmas gift for decades, bringing families and friends together for exciting real-life, high-octane racing fun. With collectible car packs ranging from the golden era of motorsport with the 1963 Monaco Grand Prix to TV legends such as *The Professionals* and their iconic Ford Capri MkIIIs, there is something for every classic car lover. Scalextric provides everything you need to have a fun-fuelled racing Christmas!
scalextric.com

Bahco socket and spanner set

I don't need a set of top-quality tools like this £186.99 box of Bahco square-drive sockets and combination spanners (part no S103), but Christmas isn't about needing, it's about wanting – and I really want this. The 103-piece set from the 139-year-old Swedish tool specialist comes in a tough carry case, ready to take on the demands of classic-car maintenance. Each item is made from steel alloy, and there's a big selection of hex sockets, including shallow and deep options, and for spark plugs. There's a pair of 72-tooth ratchets, nine allen keys, 13 spanners and more, such as screwdriver bits and extension bars. The blueprint-style illustration helps you remember where everything goes, too.

screwfix.com

PICKED BY
Damon
Cogman

PICKED BY
Charlie
Calderwood

Playforever Ken Cash

I'm told by *C&SC*'s HR department that I need to take my eyes off my screen every 15 mins or so, and I find a natural way to prompt these mini breaks is cool stuff around your office. Having things you enjoy looking at and picking up is ideal, and that's the best explanation a childless 30-something can give for why I want this Playforever toy. Loosely based on a Ford GT40 and named in Ken Miles' honour, it's one of those objects you can't resist fiddling with, and is as brilliantly built and satisfying to play with as you'd hope from how it looks (and costs, at £43.50). I'll take mine in blue, please.

playforever.co.uk

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Autoglym Deluxe Exterior Collection

Exclusive to Halfords, the Autoglym Deluxe Exterior Collection is the perfect gift for those who wish to give their car's bodywork added glow this Christmas. The kit is packed with seven products and three accessories that will enhance the appearance of exterior bodywork and deliver long-lasting protection. This essential gift kit features Ultra High Definition Shampoo that cleanses exterior surfaces with ease, Rapid Ceramic Spray that produces a shine and delivers up to three months of protection, and Instant Tyre Dressing that delivers a light sheen to tyres. Accessories include a Microfibre Wash Mitt and an InstaDry cloth. RRP £84.99.

halfords.com

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uk.pocher.com

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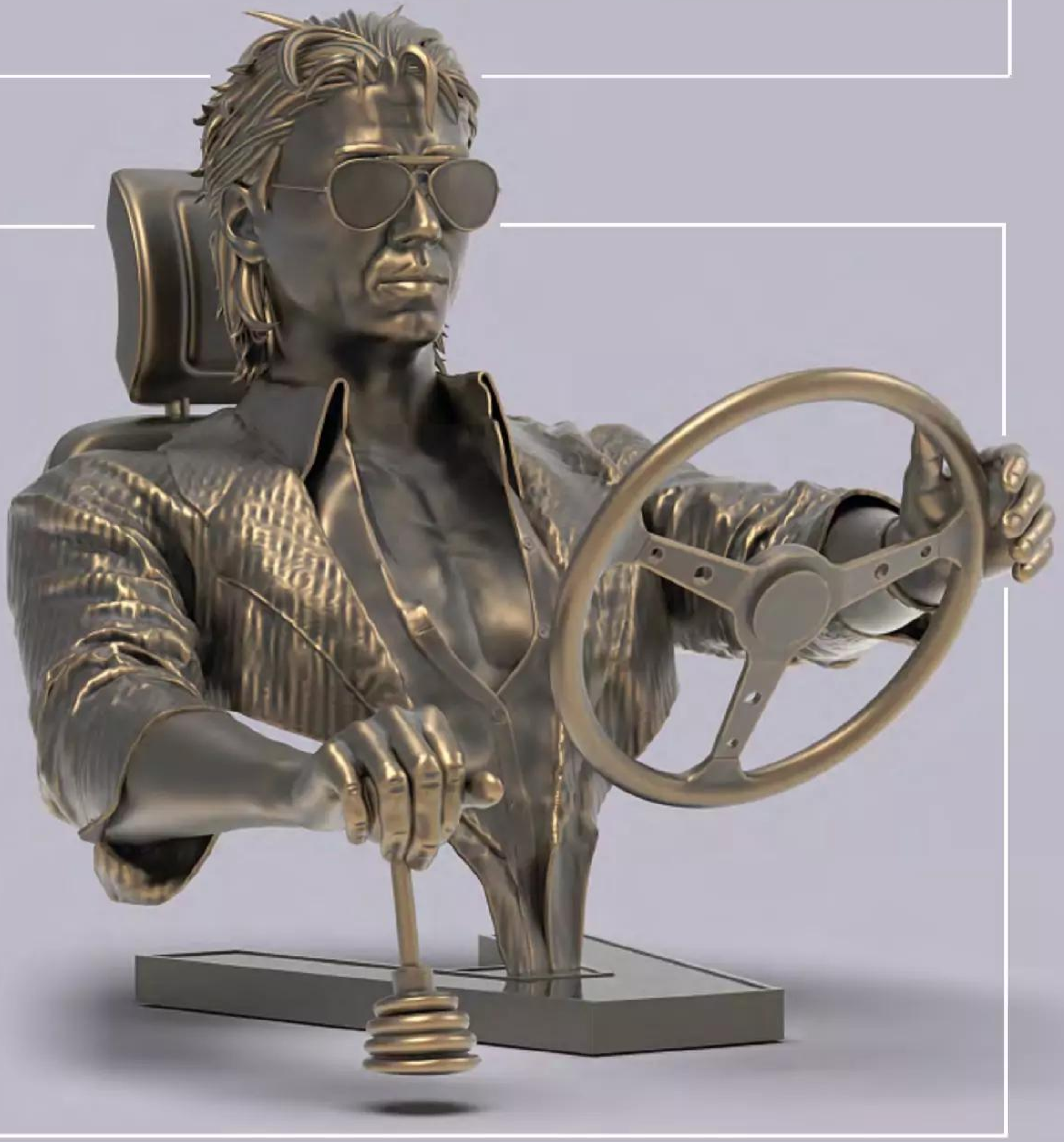

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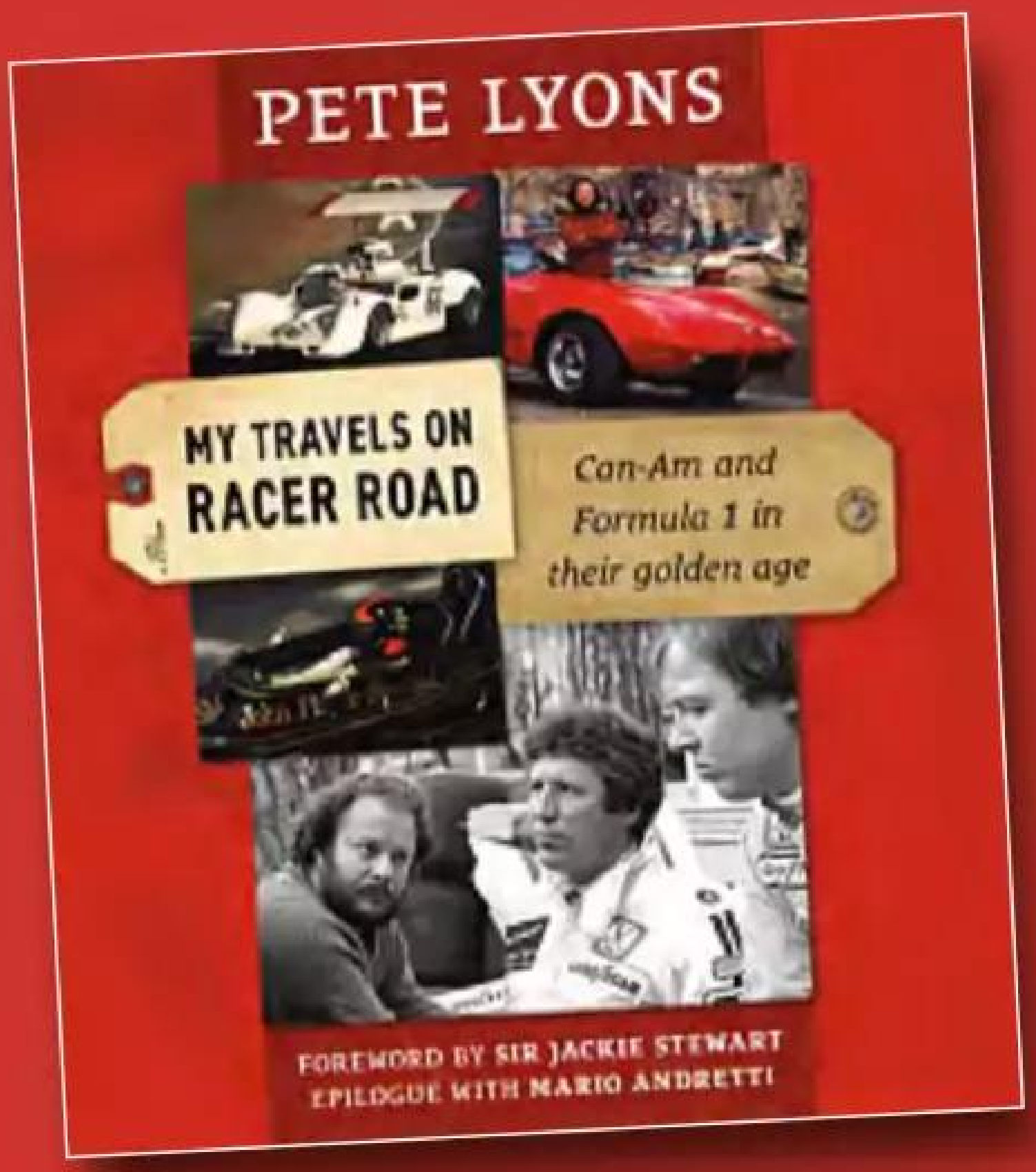
PICKED BY
Martin Port

Land-Rover Series II RCC kit

Top of my list would be an old bench-top Myford lathe for the workshop – handy for turning up or altering the myriad small parts needed through the course of a build or restoration. However, the big kid in me would settle for one of Boom Racing's 1:10-scale Series II Land-Rovers. The radio-controlled 88in has an aluminium chassis, steel driveshaft and an anti-torque-twist transfer case – which means that, once the motor and steering servo are added, the mini rock-crawler is almost as capable as the real thing. Admittedly, attention to detail and build quality don't come cheap – the unpainted body and leaf-sprung chassis kit will set you back £607.57 – but there's already an enthusiast following, with customers producing exact replicas of their own Landies. If nothing else, finding this under the tree would keep me busy for the rest of the winter.
boomracing.com


PETE LYONS
MY TRAVELS ON RACER ROAD
Can-Am and Formula 1 in their golden age
FOREWORD BY SIR JACKIE STEWART
EPILOGUE WITH MARIO ANDRETTI

My travels on Racer Road

I'm always happy to be given a book for Christmas, almost any book. But this is special. American journalist and photographer Pete Lyons was one of the finest race reporters of the second half of the 20th century, and his lyrical style was often copied but never equalled. This £70 tome is not an autobiography, but a gentle, friendly invitation to share his memories of a life on the road, his friendships with almost everybody in F1 and Can-Am, and the joys, sorrows and special moments for someone who loved motor racing unconditionally. Every one of its 550 pages is a joy.
evropublishing.com

PICKED BY
Simon Taylor

PROMOTED

Personalised Motor Folio

This beautifully hand-finished, premium-bonded leather folio is designed to keep every important document for your car in one stylish place. Each Motor Folio is personalised with your vehicle's details, lined with soft suede and built to last, with reinforced corners. Inside, you will find record sheets, protective wallets and a USB stick for digital copies – perfect for detailing provenance, preserving service history and adding a touch of class to any glovebox. Ideal for car enthusiasts and collectors, it's available in four elegant colours.
motorfolios.com

PROMOTED

Gift your loved ones a classic vehicle health check this Christmas

Not perhaps the most exciting, but potentially the most invaluable Christmas gift for classic car owners. Leading lubricant brand Motul has long been known for quality and innovation, and this Christmas it could give the classic car of someone you care for the equivalent of a blood test. Motul's oil-analysis service is available to all, for both engines and transmissions. The spectro-analysis picks up traces of elements that either shouldn't be in your oil or are present in much higher amounts than usual, and this can give an early warning of problems, or even impending catastrophic failure! The analysis (including the sampling kit) costs just £40.
motul.com

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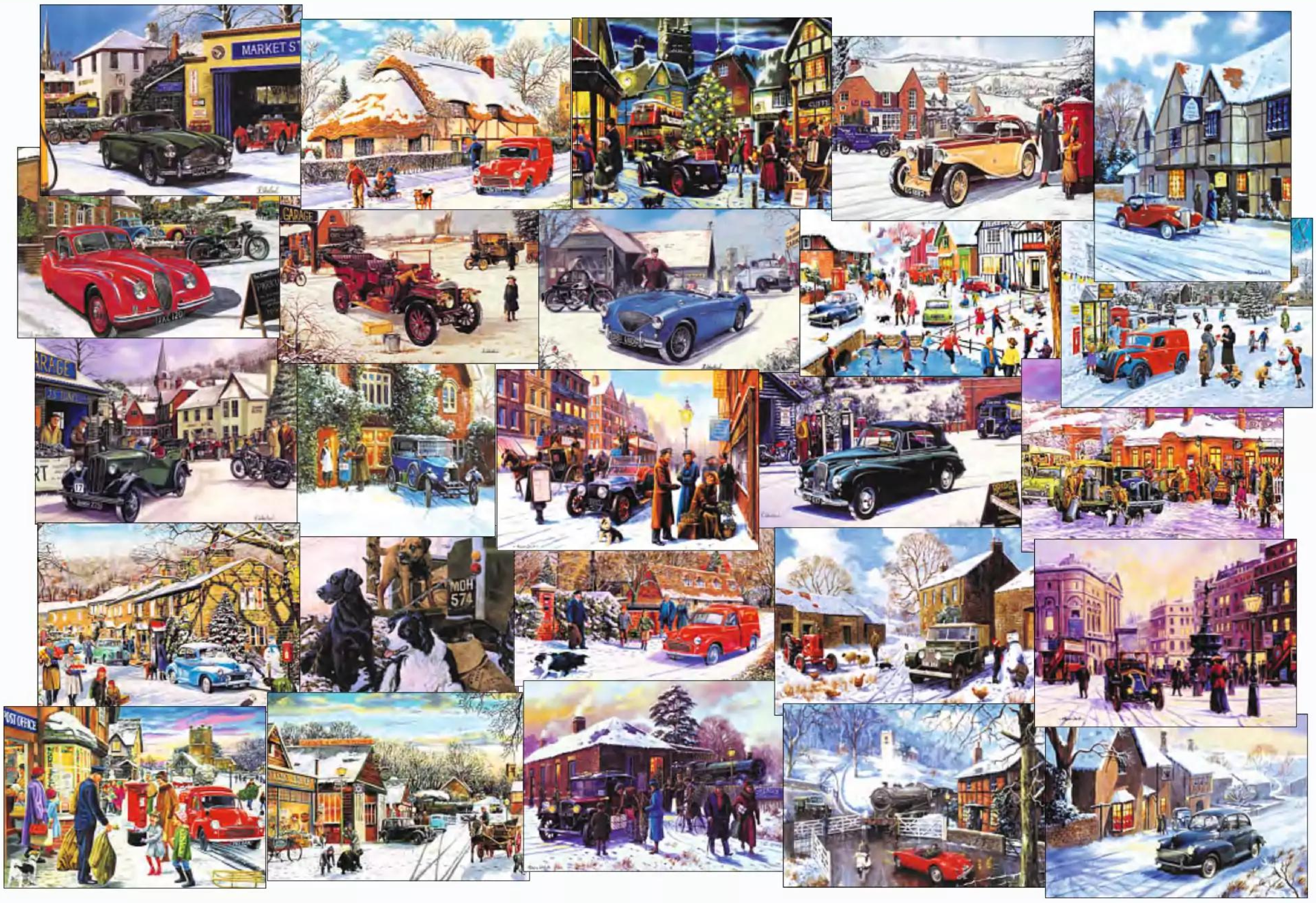

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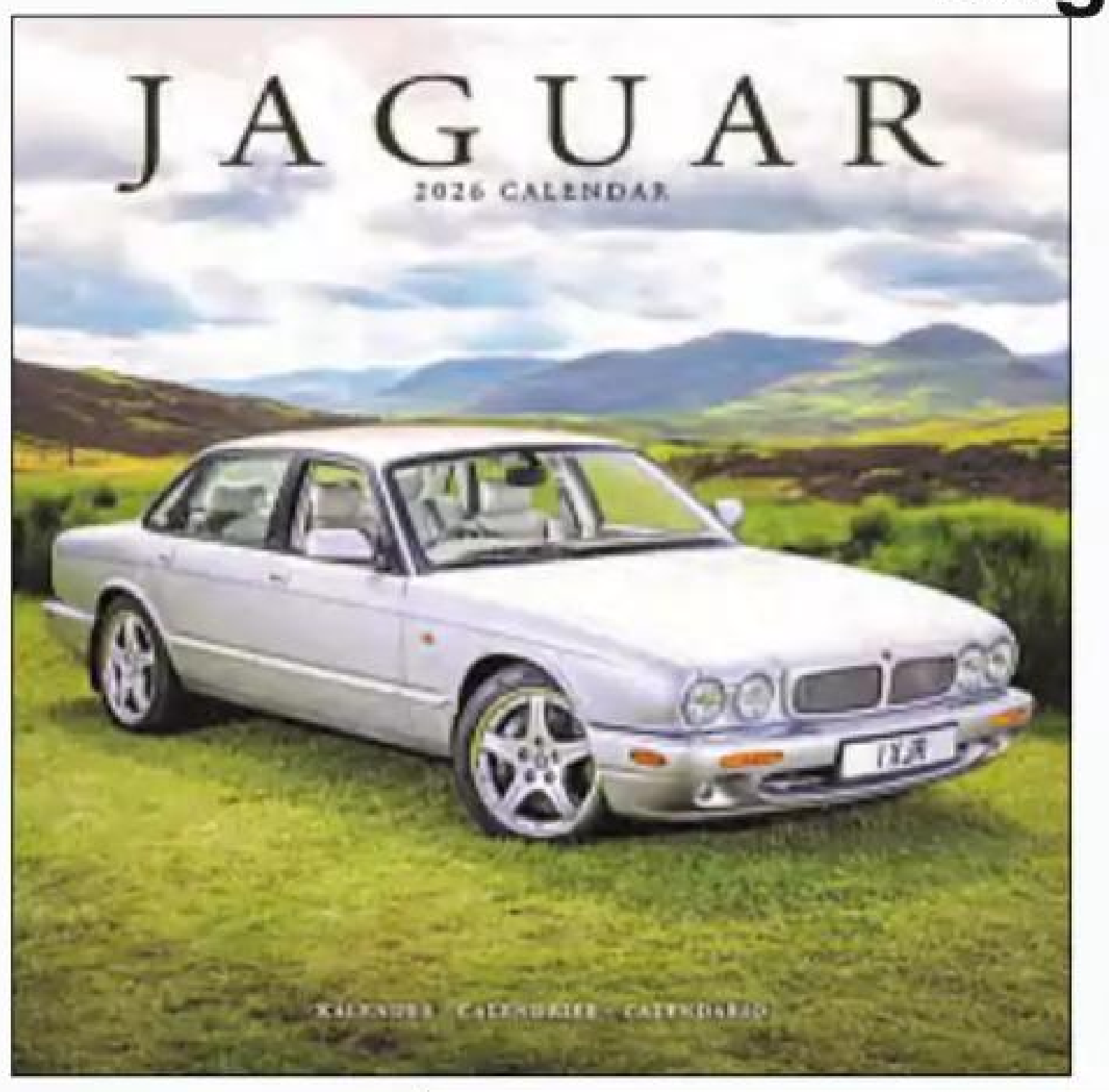
Jaguar



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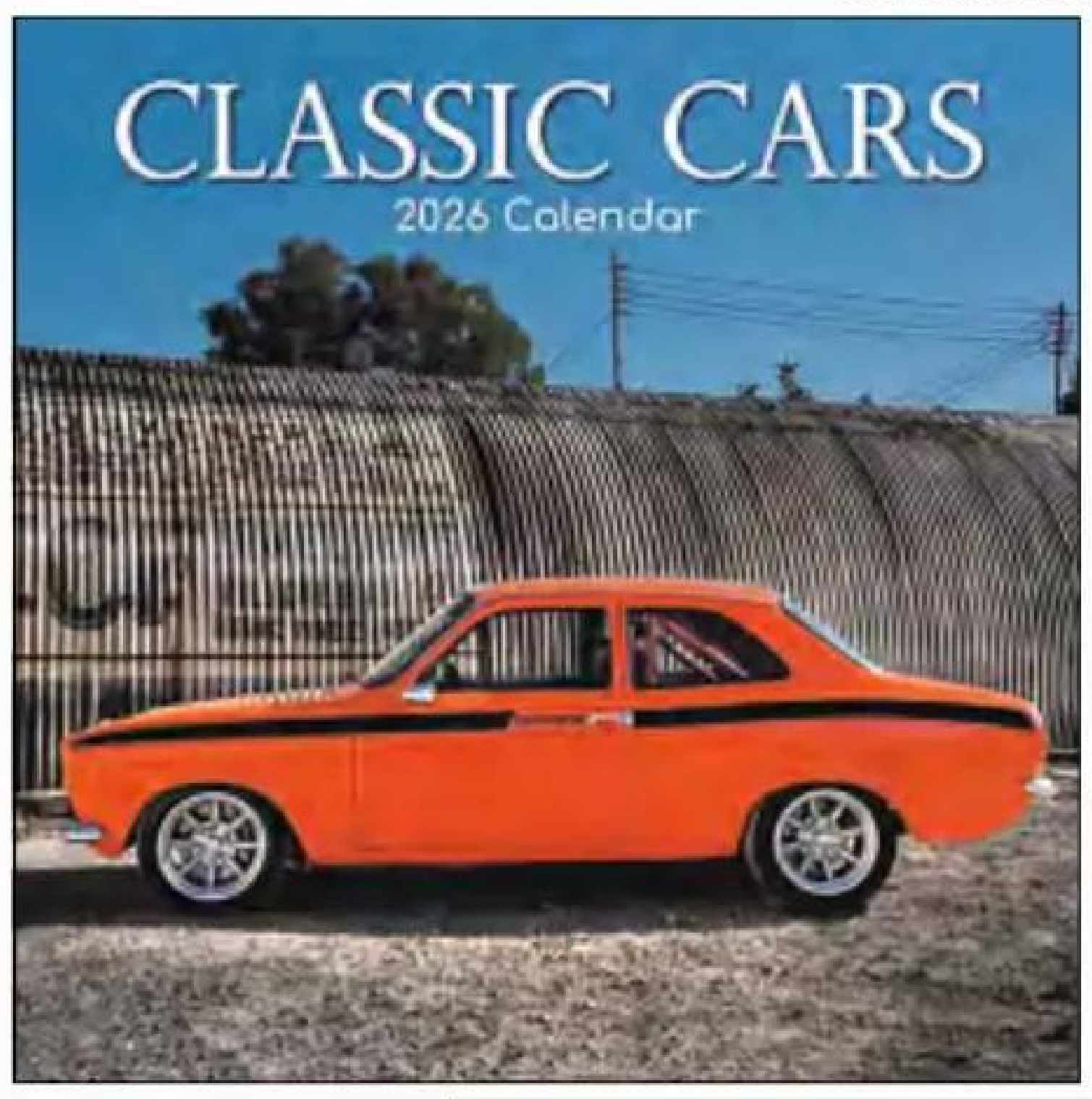

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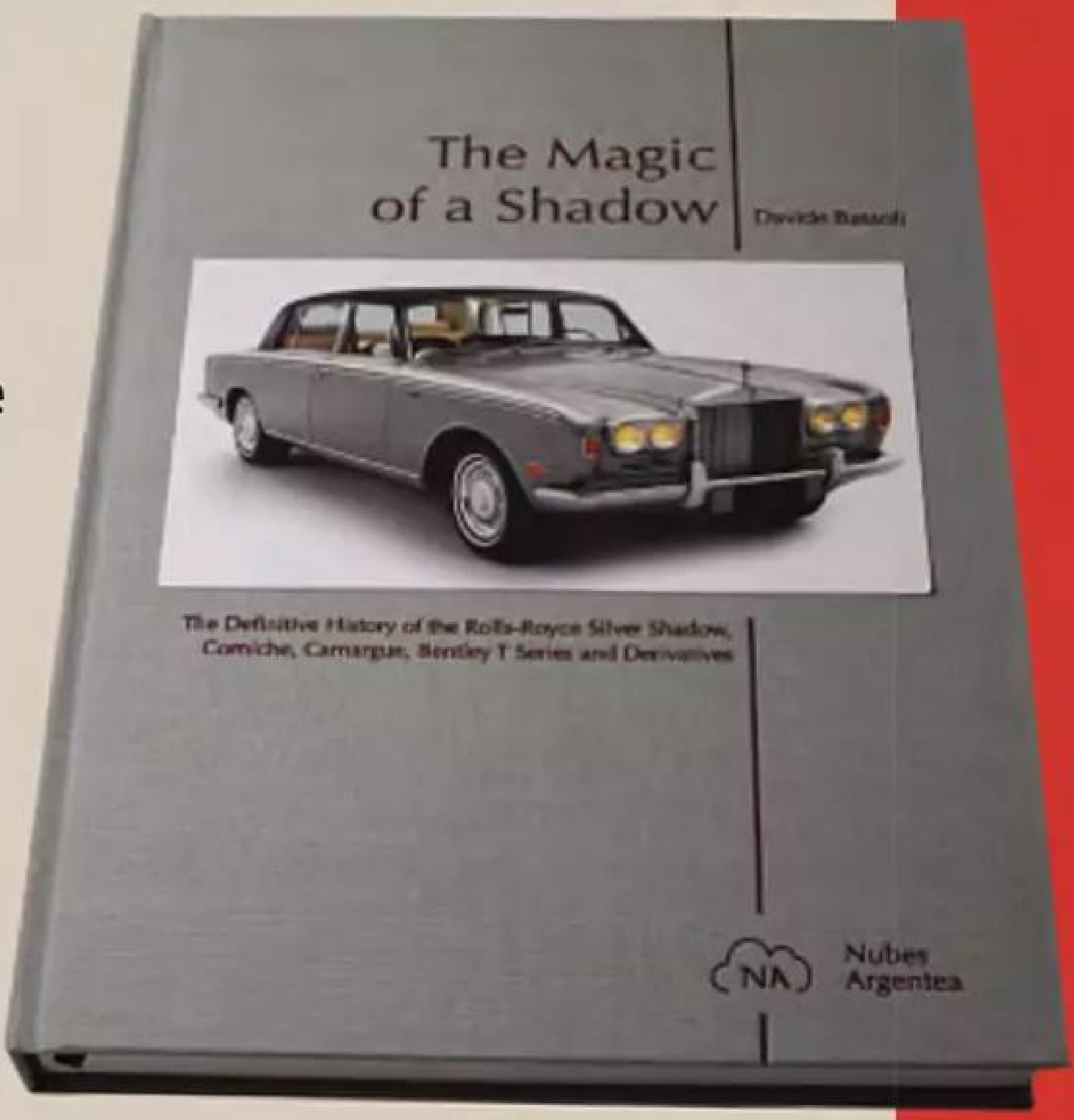
PICKED BY
Martin Buckley

Austin J40 pedal car

My first encounter with an Austin J40 was one bolted to the floor of a carousel that came to Denton market. I had no idea they were sold as toys back then, I only saw them in the context of the merry-go-round. This was the early '70s and they looked dated but still 'real': you could sense the relationship with a grown-up car. Obviously you could find one on eBay, but the Austin Pedal Cars company has put the J40 back into production, complete with hand-formed aluminium body and finely engineered mechanicals, so is the go-to place to find one. The new Continuation cars are built to order and a price is hard to establish, so I'm tempted to go for an original and this scruffy 1959 project car that's currently on offer is very appealing. It is an ex-fairground car and is sold with a box containing all of the parts needed to complete its restoration. At £5125 it's hardly cheap, but it looks good value compared to the £11,500 minter that's also for sale. Shame I don't fit any longer.
austinpedalcars.com

PROMOTED

The Magic of a Shadow


The Magic
of a Shadow
Davide Bassoli
The Definitive History of the Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow, Corniche, Camargue, Bentley T Series and Derivatives
NA
Nubes Argentea

The definitive history of the Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow and Bentley T-series as never told before. This new book *The Magic of a Shadow* describes the technological revolution of these magnificent cars, introduced in 1965. Specific chapters are dedicated to the elegant Corniche two-door saloon and convertible, the Camargue and the various other special models. The evolution of the Silver Shadow up to 1980 and of the Corniche up to 1995 are described, along with a chapter revealing previously unreleased drawings issued by HJ Mulliner, Park Ward.
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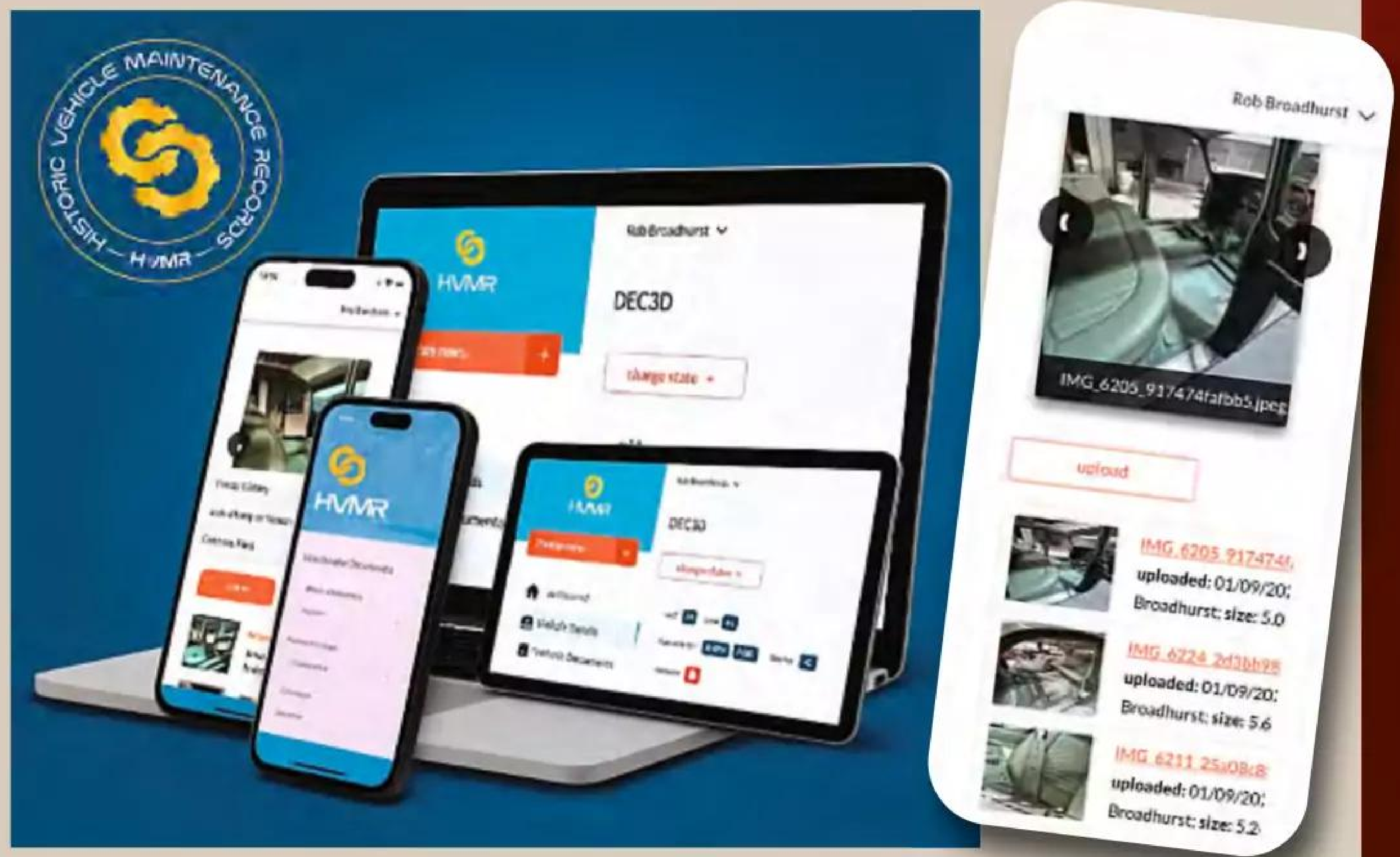
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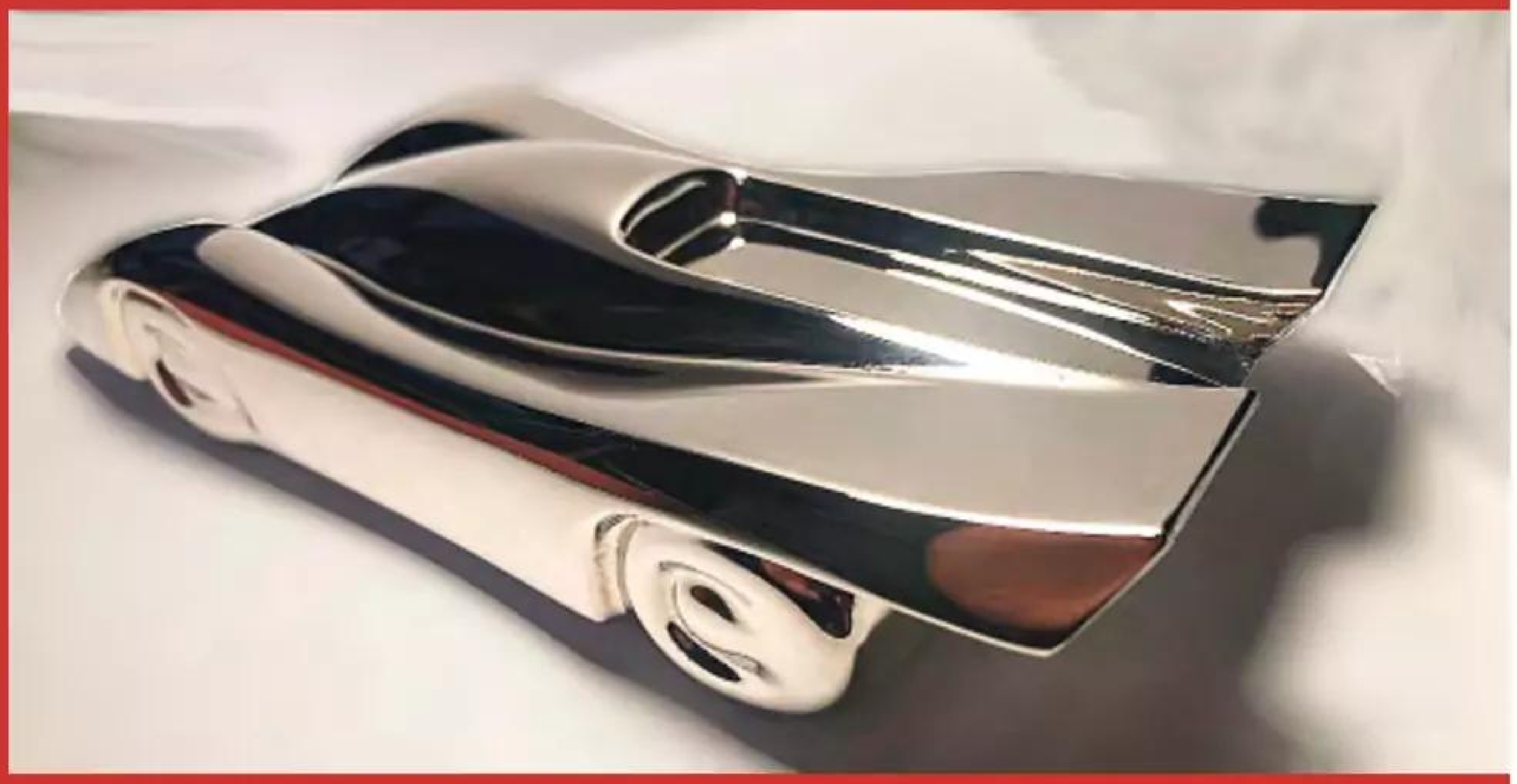

PICKED BY
Mick Walsh

Porsche 917 sculpture

The gorgeous, simplified shapes of Robin Bark's work have powerful under-the-tree appeal, as his latest Porsche 917K sculpture shows. This elegant, sand-cast aluminium piece is meticulously hand-polished by Robin before nickel-plating further enhances the dramatic shape. As well as looking dazzling from every angle, his compact artworks are lovely to handle. Measuring 178mm long and weighing 1kg, this limited edition is available in two versions: Le Mans legend Richard Attwood has signed the sterling silver option, which is limited to just 10 and priced at £1500; the standard, nickel-plated edition numbers 15 at £875 each. Both are presented in bespoke wooden boxes. Robin's full range features three other Porsches including 911, 356 Speedster and 550 Spyder. As well as his beautiful sculptures, this multi-talented artist produces original paintings and greetings cards, too.

robinbark-motorart.com

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Lizzie Pope

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Mick WALSH

> 'I couldn't resist bidding and, fearing I'd never see these rare models again, I ended up with 10 new acquisitions'

We all dream of fantasy car collections, but mine is limited to miniatures. During winter, few hobbies are more relaxing than making model cars while listening to music – the research and detail work provide good therapy when it's cold and dark outside. During the COVID-19 lockdowns, my eBay purchases of broken Bburago 1:18 Alfa 8Cs inspired homemade conversions to favourite Spiders, Monzas and even a Touring coupé.

I've tried to curb the model addiction, but new releases of cars I never dreamed would be produced still tempt me. On trips to swapmeets I pledge to limit myself to just two purchases, but the recent auction of Bernard Ford's remarkable collection by specialist Vectis Auctions gave me sleepless nights. The wealth of handmade 1:43 gems of mostly pre-war cars by Evrat, Heco, Queens, Ilario and ABC had me making dream lists of highly desired subjects. Fearing a spell of unrestrained temptation, I even planned to ignore the 4 September sale, but on the day I was online from 9am. "I'm just watching," I promised my son, Ben, who knew I wouldn't be able to control myself.

Many I'd wished for went well beyond my budget, including a Pandora Fiat S76 at £320 and AutoCult's Dubonnet Dolphin for £200 – all before the 30% buyer's premium was added. As the sale progressed, I couldn't resist bidding and, fearing I'd never see these rare miniatures offered again, I ended up with 10 acquisitions.

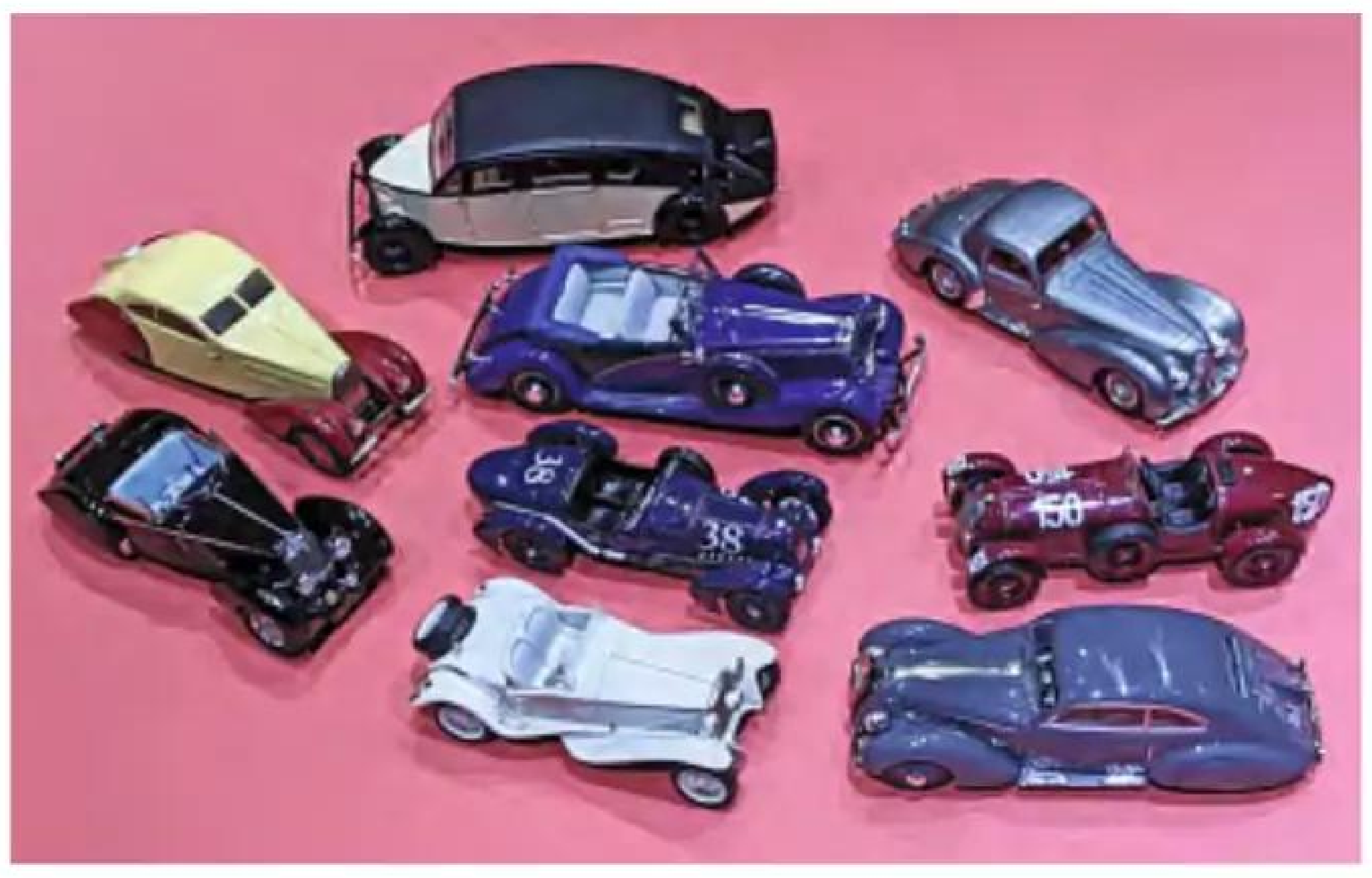
The auction was held five hours' drive from me in Stockton-on-Tees, County Durham, so my online bidding option frustratingly precluded any inspection of these rare and fragile models. Most of those I bought were in fine condition, but two had broken front axles and the longed-for Alfa Romeo 6C-1750 Flying Star by ABC was missing several parts. The 30-year-old glue had also turned yellow, and had I examined it at the sale I wouldn't have bid above bargain level. In the end it was the most expensive model I bought, but after a day's repair it now sits in my Vittorio Jano-themed display cabinet with other pre-war Alfas.

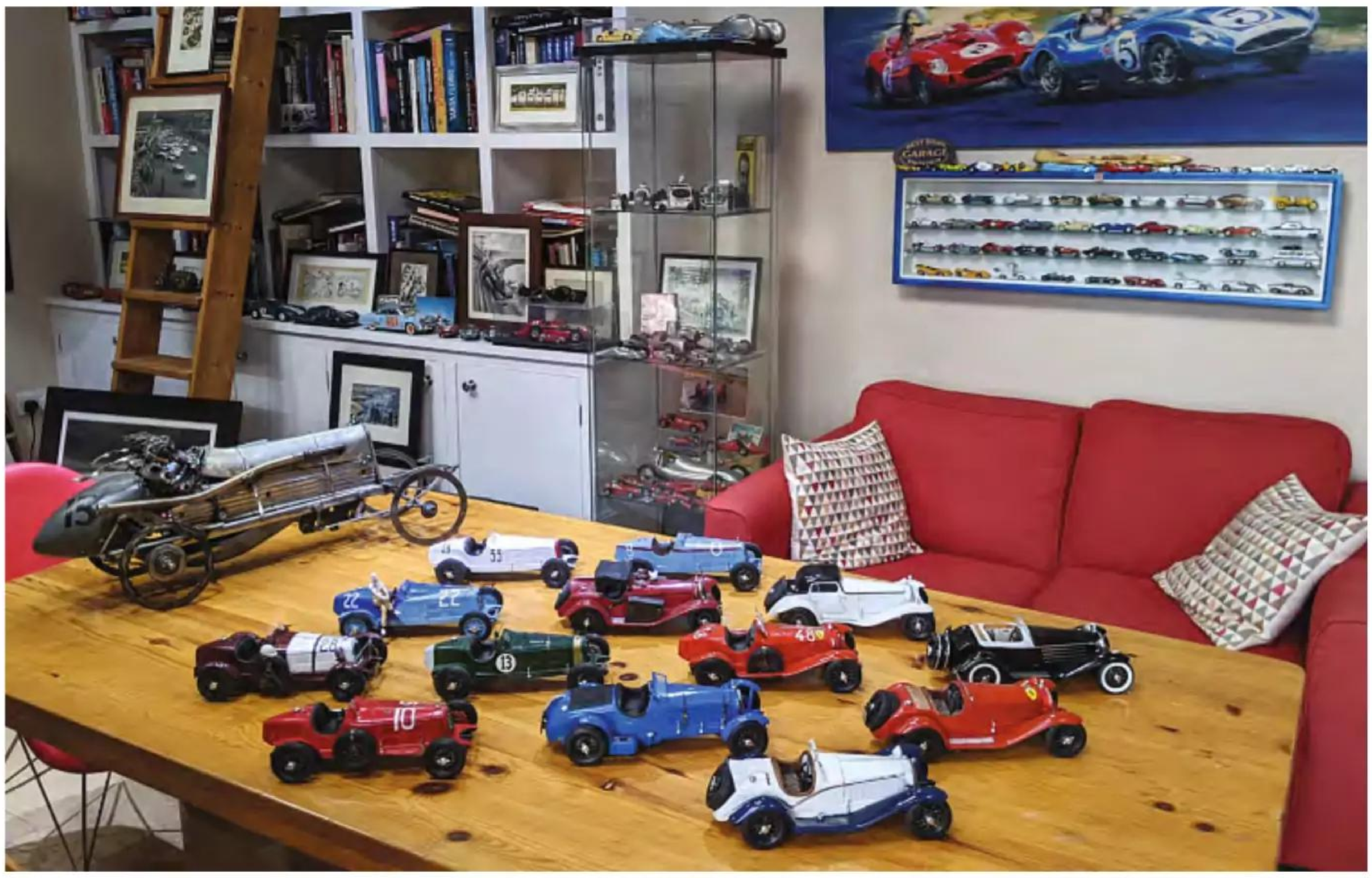
Bernard Ford's collection of mostly pre-war cars was remarkable, and even in his 96th year he was still purchasing them – his son, Michael, says his father had nearly 40 cabinets around the house. Beyond his automotive interest, Ford also collected commercial-transport models, particularly steam lorries. To enhance the displays, he sought out vintage garages, road signs and more than 1000 figures. The 4000-item collection required three separate auctions to clear everything. Ford's ever-tolerant wife also had the collecting bug, with a special interest in Worcester porcelain.

As a metallurgist employed at Rolls-Royce, Ford owned a wide range of cars from a pre-war Jowett 'twin' to a Ford Anglia. After taking early retirement in 1972, he began collecting in earnest and travelled around the country to swapmeets in search of rare models. In the pre-internet age he regularly wrote to specialist dealers around the world. "He was always sitting on the settee making a model," says Michael. "Dad even tried to get me collecting, with gifts of Matchbox Models of Yesteryear."

I would love to have seen his collection before it was sold, but I think Ford would be amused that the models are now spread around the world. The sale featured a remarkable variety of Bugatti miniatures, but most were snapped up by wealthy enthusiasts. I missed the much-desired Type 55 Figoni roadster, but I'm chuffed with two Vroom resin models of the Type 46 Million-Guiet saloon and Type 57S45 'Tank', complete with Jean Bugatti-type driver. Both boxes feature Ford's history notes in pencil, as a nice reminder of his passion.

From top: Ford Collection auction purchases included rare Squire and Alfa 6C Flying Star; lockdown project with modified Bburago 1:18 Alfa 8Cs laid out





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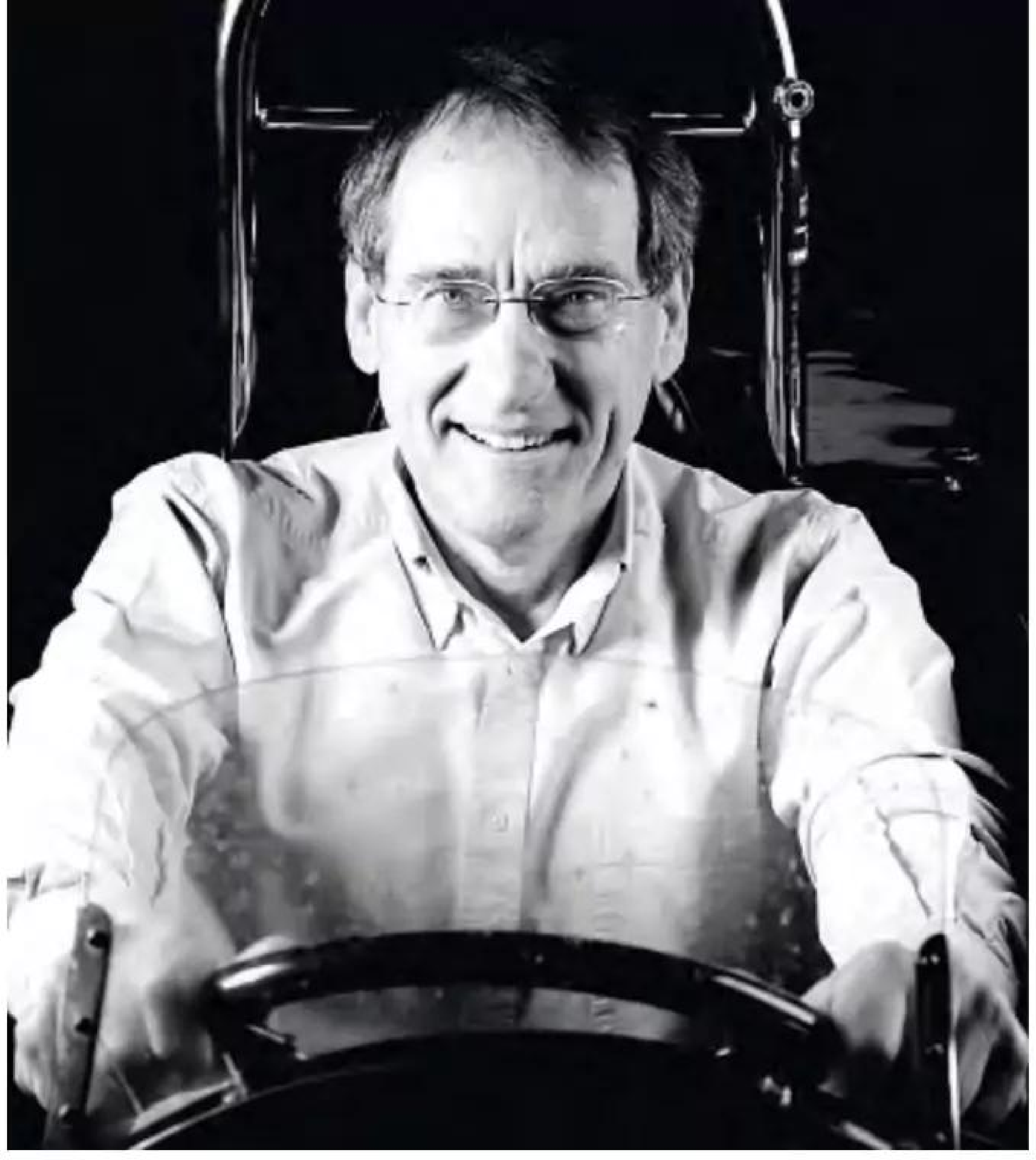


Simon TAYLOR

A recent survey has delivered the sad news that, except at school, 70% of children aged 11 to 18 never read a book. For many, at home there are no books at all. Meanwhile, TV audiences for Formula One are getting younger. So full marks to Macmillan Children's Books for commissioning F1 writer Maurice Hamilton to write a series of £6.99 paperbacks for young fans, each about a current driver, from Lewis Hamilton to Oscar Piastri. Full of easily digested facts and anecdotes, they are bright, fun, engaging and full of inspiration.

Interest in F1 may be growing exponentially, but in my childhood things were very different. Compared to football and cricket, motor racing was very much a minority sport, with no television coverage at all. What few newspaper reports there were didn't go on the sports pages, but ran in the general news as a brief paragraph – unless someone was killed, in which case there might be a lurid photograph.

Today, most children don't appear to be remotely interested in road cars. Who can blame them? So many are dull SUVs which all look pretty much the same, as romantic as tumble dryers. When cars were more varied, and there were far fewer of them, kids usually knew the name, model and features of every car on the road. Most were Fords, Austins and Hillmans, but the sight of a Jaguar, an Alvis or a Fiat – a foreign car! – caused great excitement.

And there were books. Most of us consumed children's fiction, from Enid Blyton to *Biggles*. But we had car books as well. My first, which stuck out of my Christmas stocking when I was six, was called *My Motor Book*. A large-format hardback with just 48 pages of big print, it evidently dated back to the 1930s: it included a colour painting of racing on the Brooklands banking, and the feature on the Land Speed Record gave the current holder as Sir Malcolm Campbell: "More than four miles a minute!"

When I was a little older, I was given *The Wonder Book of Motors*. The *Wonder Book* series, covering railways, aircraft, science, nature and many other subjects, ran from 1905 until the end of the 1950s, all of them frequently updated. My 256-page edition, published in 1951, told me about everything from how the automobile worked to the history of Britain's roads and, to my delight, iconic motor races.

> *'Most of us consumed children's fiction, from Enid Blyton to Biggles. But we had car books as well'*

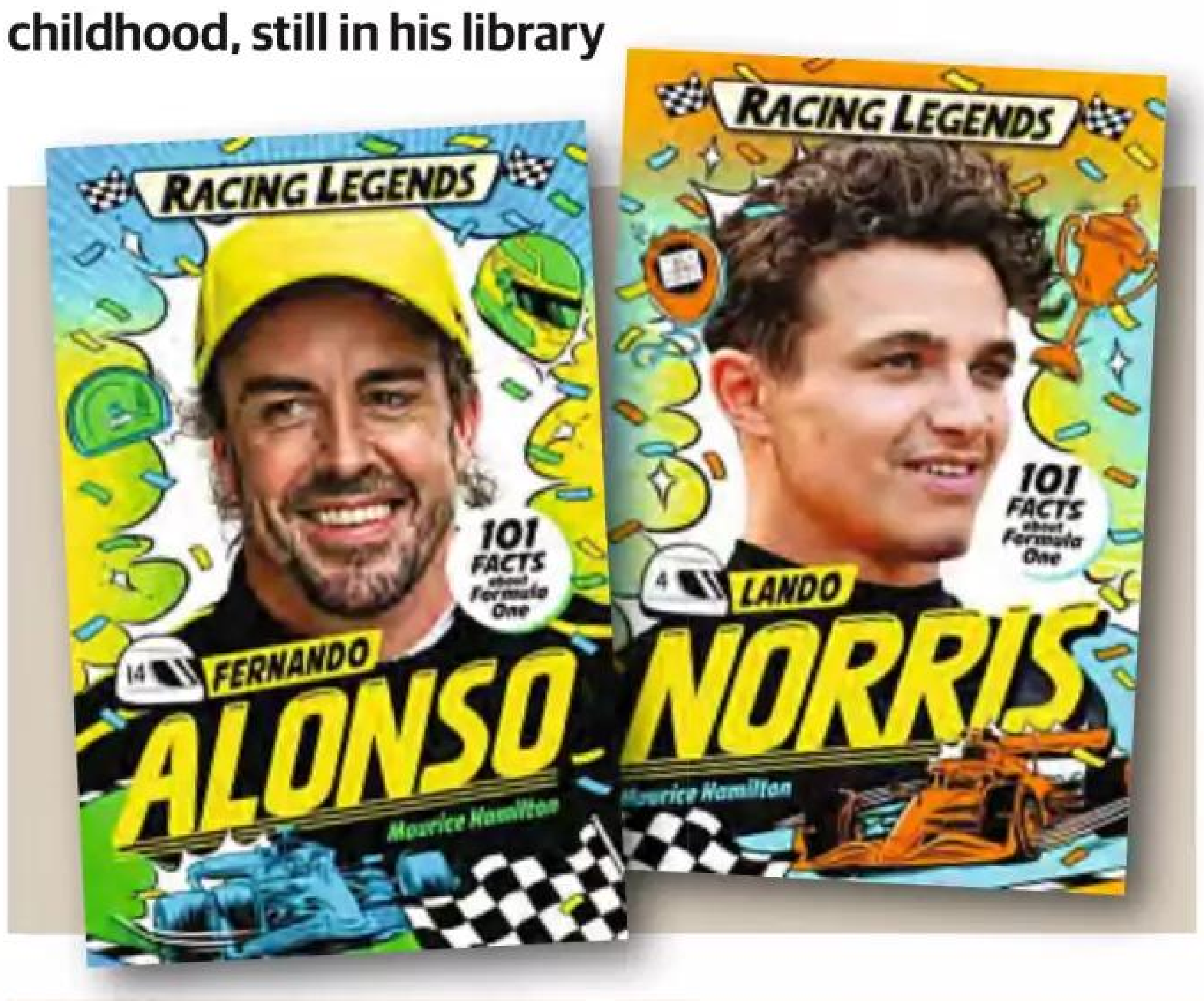
Later came the pocket-sized *Observer's Book* series, which covered birds, flowers, ships, wild animals, aircraft, and just about everything else that might interest a young person. Every year there was an updated edition of *The Observer's Book of Automobiles*. For 3/6 (17.5p), its 288 small pages gave details and pictures of virtually every new car made in the world. The foreword was by Stirling Moss (although of course he didn't write it) and included a warning: 'Younger readers are cautioned not to rush across busy roads to look at some new find, but to remember to look left, look right and look left again.'

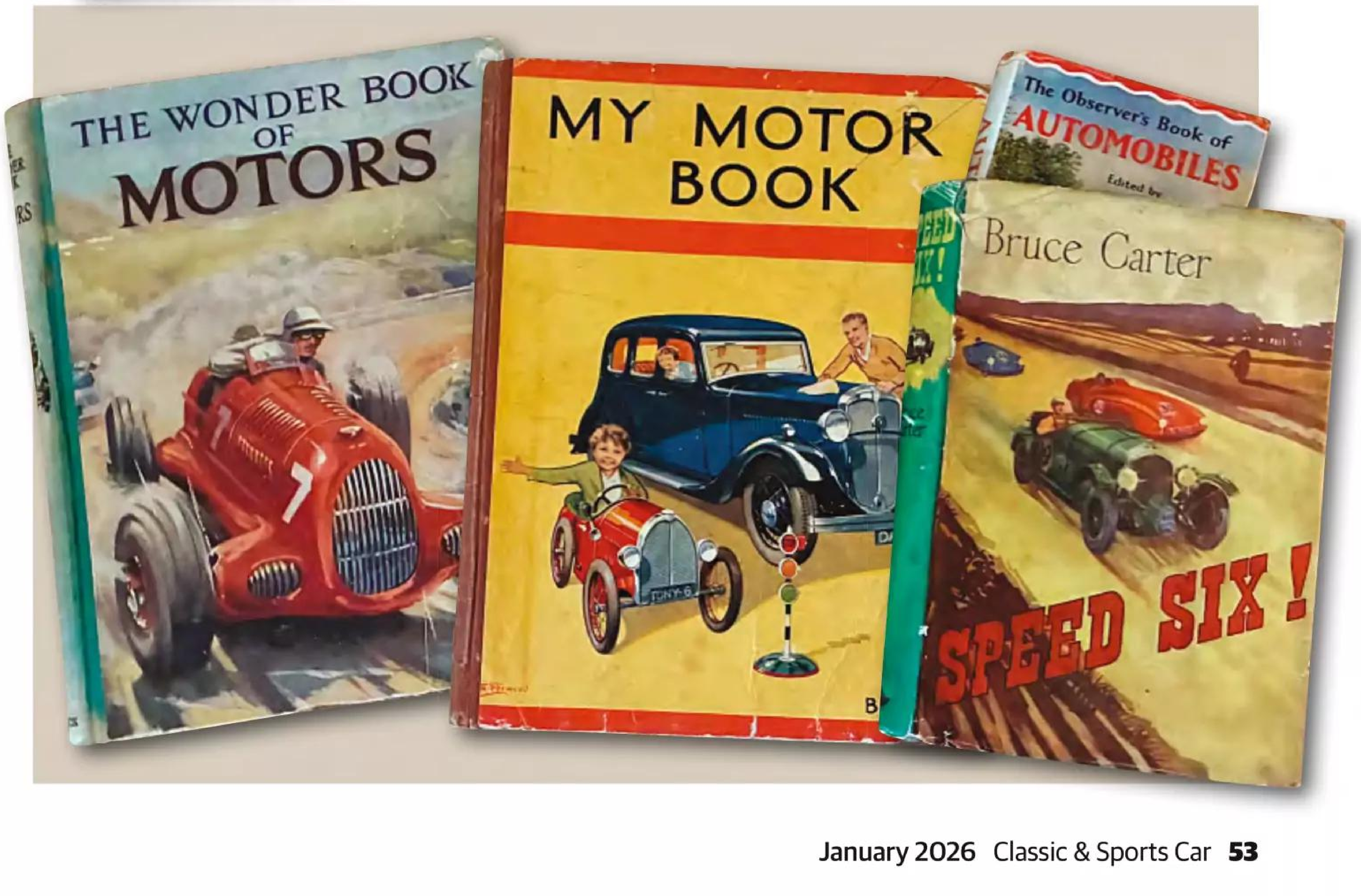
There was also car-inspired fiction. Before Le Mans each year I would read *Speed Six!*, a wonderful tale of how three young lads find an old vintage Bentley in a scrapyard, do it up, and enter it for Le Mans. The other drivers laugh and jeer but, after much drama and derring-do, of course they win the race – foiling a gang of crooks on the way.

The author was Bruce Carter, a pseudonym for Richard Hough, a naval historian and biographer who wrote more than 80 adult books. Le Mans was then being won by D-types and Ferraris, so I knew the whole story was totally unbelievable. But I loved it nonetheless.

These and other books fired my imagination and fed my hunger for car knowledge. And, because I have never quite learned to throw anything away, I have them still.

From top: newly published to attract young F1 fans; books that enlivened *Throttle*'s childhood, still in his library





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V
EVENTS

Martin BUCKLEY

I am finding it hard to sleep at the moment, which has caused me to reacquaint myself, via the wonders of YouTube, with a TV series called *Department S*. I'm currently on a dose of at least two episodes a night. This was Incorporated Television Company supremo Lew Grade's answer to ABC's *The Avengers*: an elite section of Interpol, weird 'unsolvable' cases, a wacky main character and occasionally some interesting ideas… but mostly not. Throw in a crime-solving computer with lots of spools and flashing lights, plus an American sidekick with great hair (Joel Fabiani) to help flog the show to the USA, and you have pretty much a cliché of the ITC action-series formula. Also lots of fast cars and pretty girls, plus a side order of comedy violence. Best of all, a great theme tune: I have very fond memories of driving my Lancia 2000 Berlina around London in the late '80s with Edwin Astley's arrangement as a mood-setter.

The action ranges across the UK and Europe; most episodes appear to kick off at Heathrow with a jet either landing or taking off, giving the impression the producers wanted to tap into newly emerging package-holiday aspirations. Not that anything is filmed on location: the budget only extended to potted palm trees and a few exotic numberplates. What could not be filmed on the Elstree back lot or a local hotel pool was recreated in the studio. As in *Carry on Abroad*, you can see the actors shivering, no matter how hard they try to invoke the feel of the south of France or the Costa del Sol. Via the tiny black-and-white screens on which it first aired, nobody noticed or cared.

The feel is 'international crime-fighting meets early-'70s Martini advert', particularly whenever the protagonist, Jason King, appears. With his flamboyant hair and tailored clothes, King was played by the wonderful Peter Wyngarde. This was a new kind of hero, who had the ladies' hearts aflutter. Wyngarde was a fine stage actor, and *Department S* made him a household name: at the height of his fame, he published a risqué spoken-word album and was twice voted Britain's best-dressed man.

Wyngarde became such a phenomenon that, post-*Department S*, he even got his own series, *Jason King*. This one I do remember: even aged five I was uncertain of the nature of the man's appeal. My mum had fallen under his spell – "Do your cuffs like Jason King!" – as the '70s replacement for the clean-cut Simon Templar.

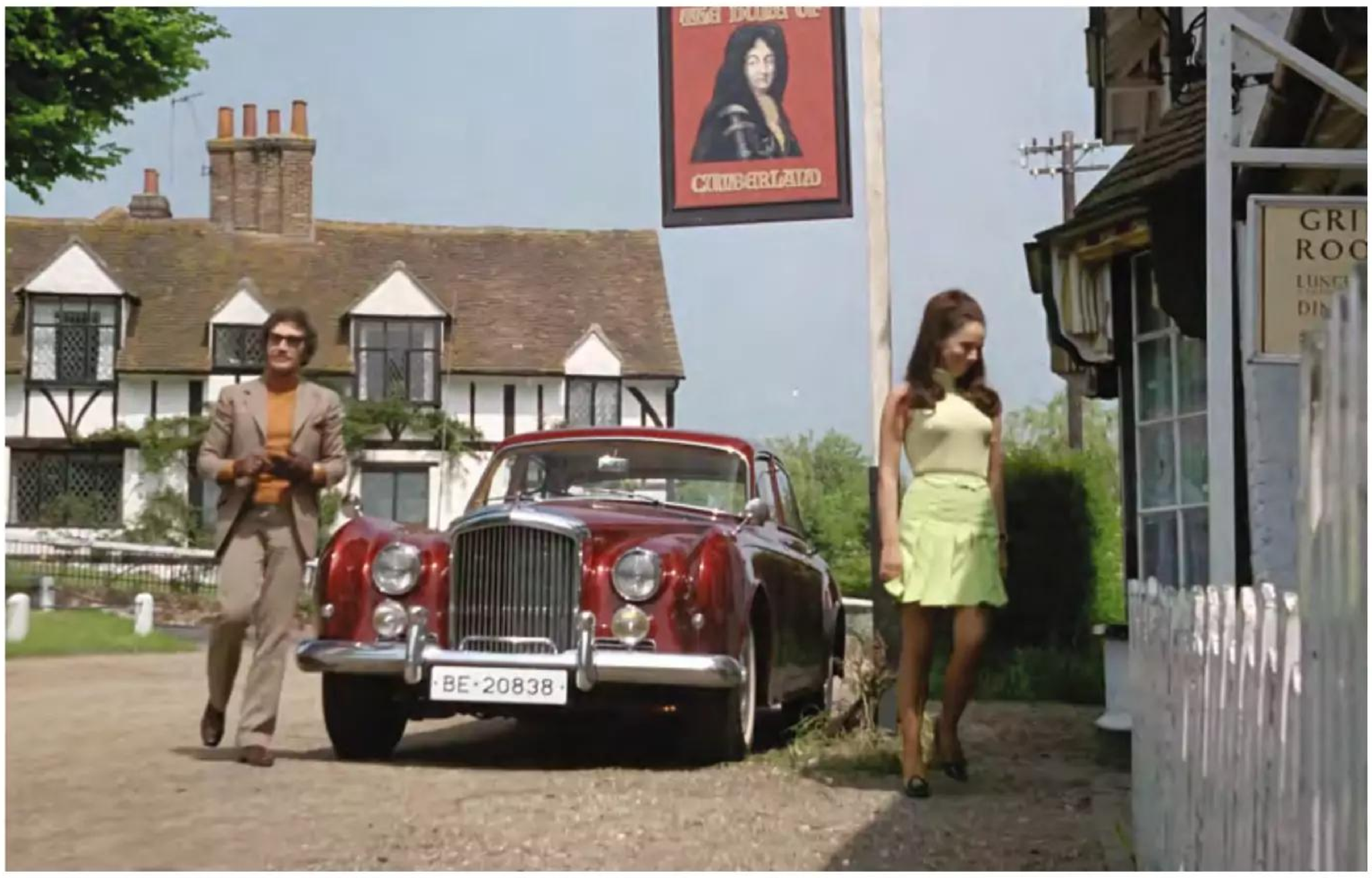
> 'When the script demands that the Silver Wraith limo explodes, it magically turns into an Austin Sheerline'

In fairness, he is the best thing in the show, with his charisma bolstered by a James Young Bentley Continental S2 on Swiss plates; the car, and clothes, were allegedly Wyngarde's own. He carries his myriad affectations lightly: Sobranie Cocktail cigarettes, matching shirt and tie in lurid colours, and Zapata moustache. When necessary, King/Wyngarde can direct a convincing punch, taking on the likes of John Bindon and future Darth Vader actor Dave Prowse. You can even spot Anthony Hopkins in a rare – possibly unique – ITC appearance.

Department S probably has the best set of cars of any ITC series: regulars include a Vauxhall Ventora (for Fabiani), while computer boffin Rosemary Nichols swaps between a Lancia Fulvia Coupé and a Lotus Elan +2S. For foreign missions (driving on the wrong side of the road in Wales) there is a Fiat 2300S Coupé and a Mercedes SL Pagoda; baddies almost always drive Yanks or a recurring black Ford Zephyr MkIV. Corvairs turn up repeatedly – usually as a prelude to a crash – and a black Rolls-Royce Silver Wraith limo often stands in for the Phantom V seen in the opening credits. When the script demands that the Wraith explodes, it magically turns into an Austin Sheerline.

They must have knocked out dozens of episodes of this show, because there is always a fresh one to watch. Or maybe they are coming around again and I've simply not noticed.

From top: Joel Fabiani (on left) and Peter Wyngarde fought crime the flamboyant ITC way; Jason King's Continental S2 apparently belonged to Wyngarde himself



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Letter of the month

The annual celebration of pre-1905 machinery is a tonic for reader Simon

ROYAL AUTOMOBILE CLUB

VETERANS ENRICH THE SOUL

I spent this morning watching the London to Brighton Veteran Car Run (*News & events*) make its way through my home town of Crawley. I first watched the Run in the early '80s, aged four or five, with my dad. We'd stand on Pease Pottage hill until I could bear the cold no more; if it was raining, we'd watch from the car. It became an annual outing.

Seeing families with young children doing the same thing today made me realise that the London to Brighton Run is probably the most accessible motoring event in Britain. No tickets, no membership, no travelling halfway across the country to an isolated track and then queuing for three hours to get in; just stand at the side of the road and another one will be along in a minute.

We saw 'Genevieve', OWL 707 (*C&SC*, November) and Duncan Pittaway's mad steam wagon, plus a three-wheeler charging down the road with its exhaust popping like a machine gun was a joy in comparison to the sanity-eroding banging from modern 'performance' exhausts fitted by idiots who think that one o'clock in the morning is a good time to thrash their cars around town.

Reading Martin Buckley's November *Backfire*, he articulates better than I can how the Veteran Car Club of Great Britain and this event can touch people, perhaps without them really knowing how.

Having lived for most of my life in the 'rubbish- and graffiti-strewn dystopian nightmare' that is Crawley, I know how modern life can appear devoid of any charm; but then the veterans chug, rattle and hoot down the road and it just puts a smile on your face.

Thank you to the Veteran Car Club and the London to Brighton Run.

Simon Wilson
Via email

Letter of the month wins a top motoring title worth up to £150 (including postage), courtesy of Hortons Books. Founded in 1997 by father-and-son Mike and Ben, and now run by Ben and wife Jennifer, Hortons is a leading expert in new, used and out-of-print motoring literature, with some 12,000 books and brochures in stock.

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alastair.clements@haymarket.com

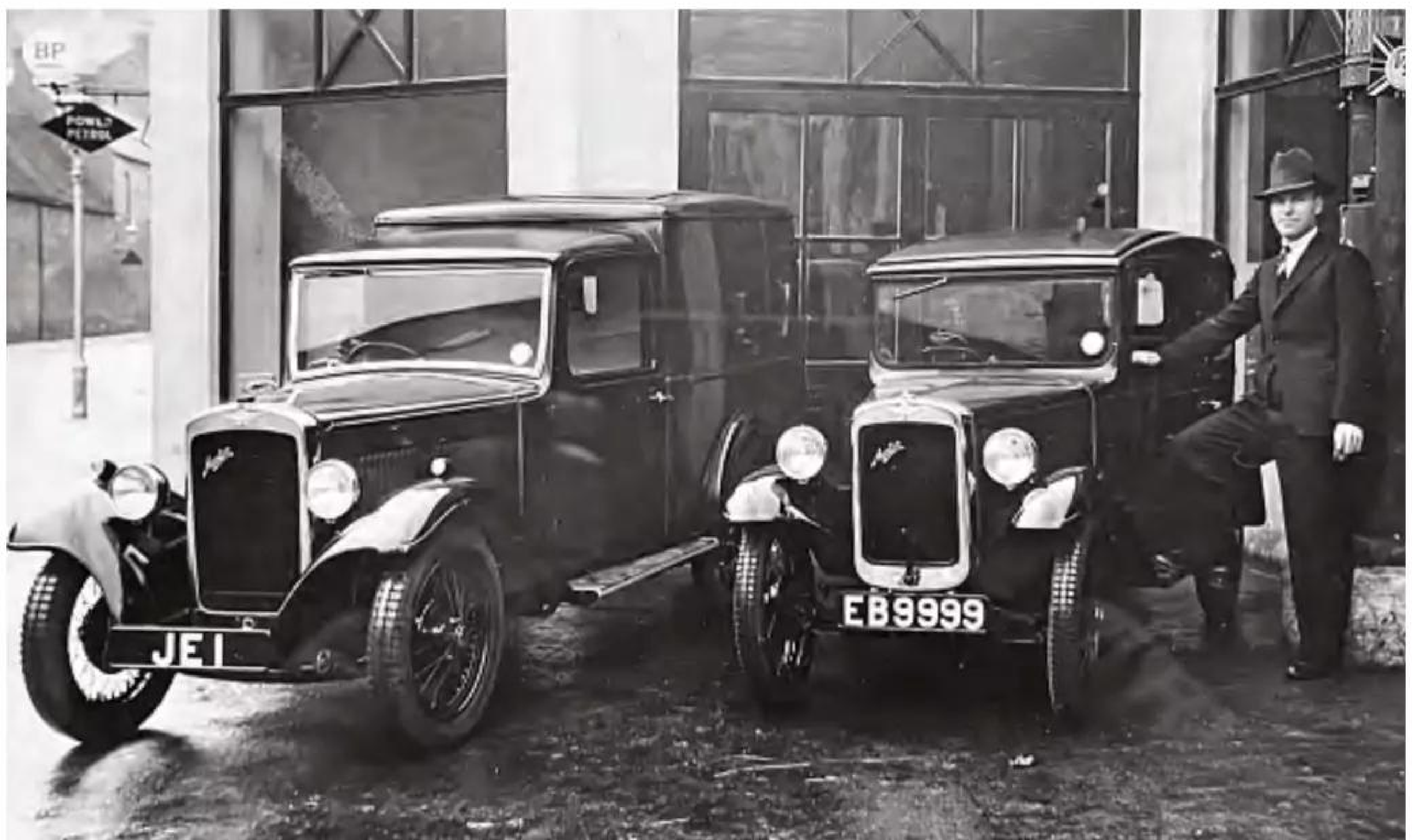
A numbers game

I am not in the habit of corresponding with either Rowan Atkinson or *C&SC*, but thought you both might be curious abut the provenance of JE 1, the numberplate attached to Mr Atkinson's Rolls-Royce Phantom in November's *Letters* pages.

JE 1 started life on a far humbler vehicle, an Austin delivery van, as the photograph of my grandfather, Charles Hull, shows (below). The sale of the last EB numberplate and JE 1, both being Isle of Ely, Cambridgeshire, registrations, was in 1933 and Charles is standing in front of his Austin agency on Lynn Road, Ely.

Thanks to Mr Atkinson for his safe keeping of JE 1, but also for his humour, petrolheadedness and sartorial elegance – all things shared with my grandfather (albeit with less renown!).

Adrian Hull
Brinkley, Cambridgeshire



Star of the screen

I very much enjoyed November's *C&SC*, which proved to be the perfect companion for a seven-hour transatlantic flight. The letter from Rowan Atkinson in the same issue spurred me on to write to you about how classic cars are also iconic film stars, plus a fun link with Ian Callum.

I am very lucky to own a 2006 Aston Martin Vanquish S, which is a magical thing. Last summer, Netflix was scouring the market for 'the perfect old-school classic car' for the film *The Thursday Murder Club*, which was recently released, and it wasn't in the slightest bit interested in featuring a brand-new sports car. I was very amused to receive a call at around that time from the production company, simply asking if my car was available and, if so: "May we borrow it, please, for a few days for a film we are making?"

It has been a fun thing, with lots of friends and family texting me, delighted to see the Vanquish playing such a starring role. Furthermore, being driven so well by Dame Helen Mirren no less, who wouldn't even let Pierce Brosnan have a go! So to all classic owners out there, you never know when the phone might ring.

Thanks again for a cracking read and some wonderful stories.

Paul Smith
Clanfield, Oxfordshire

Pedant of the month

Pedant of the month wins a *C&SC* baseball cap. Send your observations to *alastair.clements@haymarket.com*

The story on the 19th-century Wolseley (November) says it was one of a select group of cars that brought motoring to the masses. In 1899 a Wolseley cost £110, when an average house was c£230 – so the car cost virtually half as much.

The average house price today is c£290k; taking the car at half of that would mean 'motoring for the masses' cost £140,000. It is not likely that a person on average earnings (£37,000) would be buying a £140k car. The masses in the 1890s might have aspired to acquire a new bicycle or, if particularly ambitious, one of those new motorised bicycles.

Joe Fitzgerald

Comments & clarifications

I would add to Simon Taylor's account (*Full throttle*, October) that Daphne Arnott also used a workshop to the rear of the Cannon Garage in Pinner – now the site of a Tesco Express.

Brian AL Jones

I enjoyed Martin Buckley's November *Backfire* on the VCC, but Jack Hargreaves' 1970s 'wood-whittling series' was not *Country Matters*. It was *Out of Town*, with a theme tune sung by Max Bygraves.

Peter Rugg

While the Lancia Aprilia was remarkable, a 0-60mph time of 12.6 secs (*Classified pick*, November) suggests the right numbers, but not necessarily in the right order.

Geoff Whyler

Sorry, this is a 0-50mph figure, not 0-60mph… Ed

Border force

Having taken the Ferrari 308GTS over the Alps (November), Simon Hucknall remarked that 'a current hot hatch would almost certainly show it the way'. But the Ferrari must have been flying up the Col du Galibier in order to reach the Swiss border! The border Simon arrived at was that between the *départements* of les Haute Alps and la Savoie, the emblem of which is similar to the Swiss flag.

I remember the climb well, having visited the region a few years ago in our 1978 Chevrolet Corvette C3 (above). Despite some glorious weather during our Corvette Club de France weekend trip, we were not quite as lucky as Simon – our crossing of Europe's highest paved true pass, the Col de l'Iseran, was completed in snow and accompanied by biting wind. It made for a few memorable photographs, however.

Stephen Irons
Loir en Vallée, France

A clearer view

It was nice to see the article on the Porsche targas (November), because I own a 1976 3.0 Carrera, but I'd like to point out a couple of errors. It is stated that the heated rear 'screen did not appear until 1982, but UK models did have this feature – in fact, it has a two-stage heating control. You could also specify a rear wiper (above). Note that the German model featured had a black roll hoop, whereas UK cars had a brushed-chrome finish.

In the factfile, the power figures were wrong: the 2994cc engine produced 200bhp at 6000rpm – you quoted 147bhp, which is the kW equivalent. This was basically the new turbo unit without the turbo, so was quite robust.

I also own a Triumph Dolomite Sprint, so it was a bumper issue!

Peter Keel
Twickenham

Any port in a storm?

Regarding Richard Pryce's numberplate vs registration observations (*Pedant of the month*, November), I am reminded that ships can be registered in one place but flagged in another. Perhaps this is more prevalent in cars than we think?

My 1983 five-speed W123 Mercedes-Benz 200 (below) was 'flagged' in Rutland with an 'FP' suffix, but was very much a Derby car, supplied new to the first owner before me via Mertrux.

Jeff Davenport
Uttoxeter

Blackpool peer

As a TVR enthusiast of many years (I bought my first in 1992), I was delighted to read the recent *TVR Legends* special collector's edition. since September 2009, I have been the owner of the unique TVR Trident Convertible featured in the magazine: it is now registered in France (below), and I try to drive it as much as possible.

I have done various bits of work on the car to put it back to how it was when it was built: I have swapped the automatic gearbox for a four-speed manual, taken off the weird badge on the front grille, and removed the Cibié spotlamps and the front spoiler. Inside, I have tried to revert it to the original dashboard layout and steering-wheel position, and I think the car is much better as a result.

Olivier Goris
Via email

Brought to book

Forming conclusions based on reading magazine reviews about books by fellow journalists can be a tricky business, but this was certainly not the case with the review of *Secret Rovers* from The Crowood Press (*Book of the month*, November). James Taylor and DJ Cooke's production is a riveting read, but also a sad testimony to the sheer incompetence, self-destructive rivalries and lack of vision that must have been standard issue for executives who got themselves into positions of power at British Leyland.

At first, I was disappointed the authors didn't promote their own opinions, but on reading some chapters again, I realised that their clinical reporting style had a far greater impact than the many personal 'What Went Wrong at BL' titles. In contrast, *Secret Rovers* is packed with facts, dates and images that have never been seen in print before. No wonder it took five years to research.

My conclusion is that many of the 'characters' should have been shamed mercilessly and stripped of any ennoblement, plus their copper-bottomed pensions. Not only did they wreck several highly regarded and successful British brands, they also opened the door even wider for foreign importers.

Having read about the mid-engined BS coupé in *Motor* and

Autocar in period, I remember thinking how stunning it looked, even though it was just a cobbled-together prototype. Little did I realise that, years later, I would get the chance to drive it. That just made the pain of its demise even worse. And although there were no previews of the P8 flagship in the motoring press, *Motor Sport* did run a 'mystery' pic of it in the April 1976 issue. The registration appears to be HXC 800H: was it an old photo, or was this car still running five years after the project was cancelled? It isn't TXC 160J, the surviving P8 at Gaydon, and its fate is not resolved in the book. That really is a mystery.

Malcolm Bates
Bedfordshire

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"McQ"

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Duke on wheels

Thank you for June's movie-star cars piece. It would be impossible to cover all the films where a car played a starring role, but the omission of *"McQ"* (John Wayne, 1974) is glaring. This movie was promoted as 'Wayne on wheels' and featured a Brewster Green Pontiac Firebird Trans Am, piloted by The Duke's character, that met a gruesome fate in a back alley.

It was the first time a cannon roll was used for automotive stunt work, leading to a green Chevrolet Impala meeting its untimely end, along with a 1973 Cadillac Sedan de Ville being on the receiving end of some punishment. It deserves at least an honourable mention.

Colin Ong
Christchurch, New Zealand

Missing the mark

I enjoy the cod-sociological asides in your stories, especially because they are often so hilariously inaccurate. Take Andrew Roberts' piece on Triumphs (November). I'm sure it was tongue in cheek, but it is absurd to suggest that 'by the mid-'60s, the Herald belonged to a bygone era of *espresso* bars and Italian-suited Modernists'.

I was a young car enthusiast in the '60s, and the Herald was never even on nodding terms with the zeitgeist. People bought Heralds because they were cheap to buy and run, and the very tight turning circle appealed to the likes of my late father, a village GP. For the same reason, the Herald was used by many driving schools – I passed my test in a 12/50. Beyond the purely practical, their appeal lay in Triumph still being perceived as rather more middle-class and respectable than Ford or Vauxhall.

But Andrew excelled himself with his view on the dumpy little 1300. Take it from me, no 'with-it junior solicitor' would have been seen dead in one. A Mini Cooper, MGB or Spitfire, perhaps, but the frumpy 1300 appealed to a much older demographic. It was a decent enough car, light-years ahead of the cramped and unrefined Herald, but cool it assuredly was not.

My father stuck with Triumph for years, but the Dolomite 1850HL would be his last British car. After consuming five (yes, five) gearboxes before it was a year old, and suffering chronic problems with running on, its *pièce de résistance* was its nearside front suspension collapsing when I was on the A1. It was lovely to drive – comfortable, quick and quiet – but its appalling build quality resulted in Dad driving Hondas for the rest of his life.

John Aston
Thirsk, North Yorkshire

Advanced driving

I was pleased to read about retired police superintendent Harry Shillabear in Richard Wright's letter (November). In 1962 I was in the Service Technical Dept at BMC Cowley, and had to drive all the current makes. I was told to enrol in a three-week driving course because cars such as the Austin A99, Wolseley 6/110, Healeys and MGAs could all top 100mph.

The first week involved driving around Oxford, the second was on the Hendon skidpan, and the third was high-speed cross-country work in a 6/110. On the final day, Harry drove to the Dorset coast. After lunch he said: "Drive to Oxford as fast as you can – I have an early business dinner and I'm going to have a sleep." I got back having broken many traffic rules, but with time to spare. Happily, I passed.

Anthony Barrett
Kineton, Warwickshire

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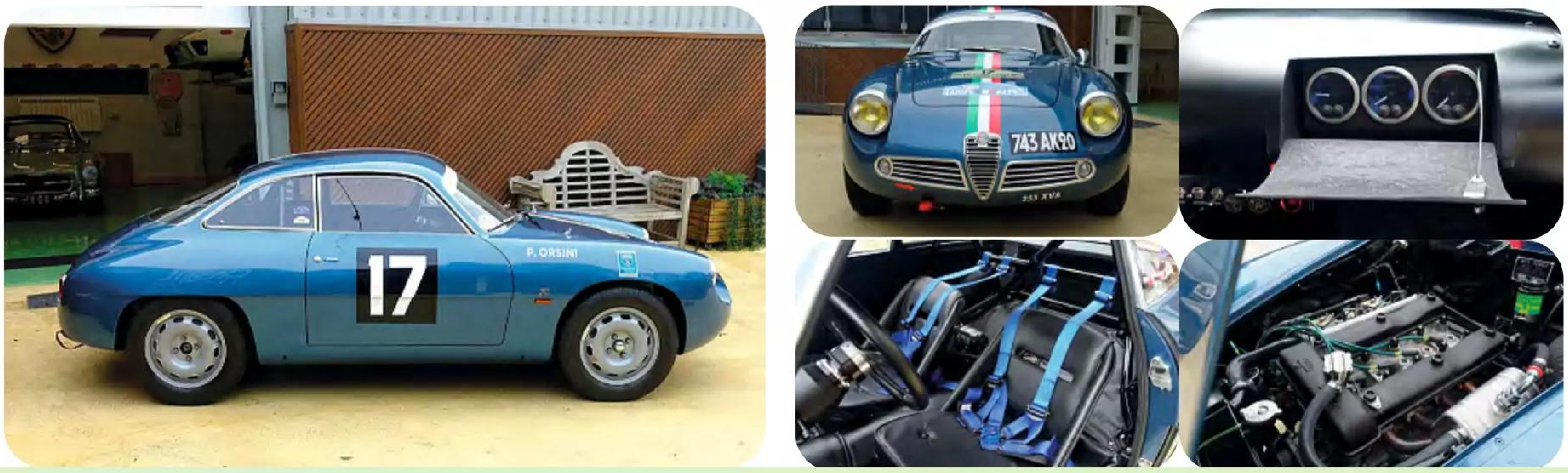
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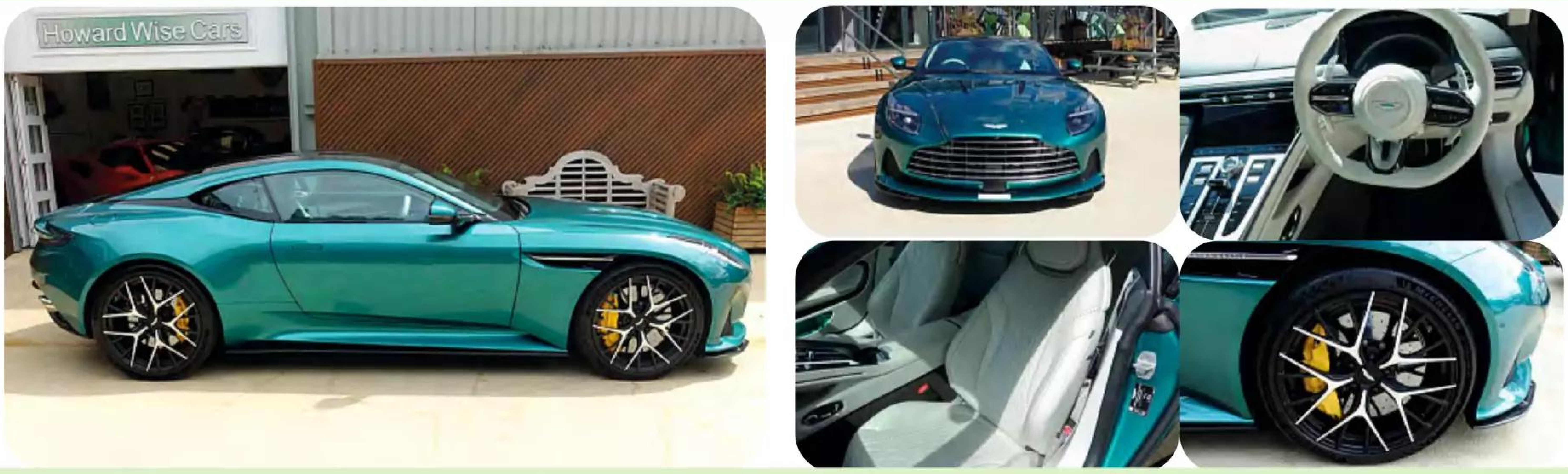
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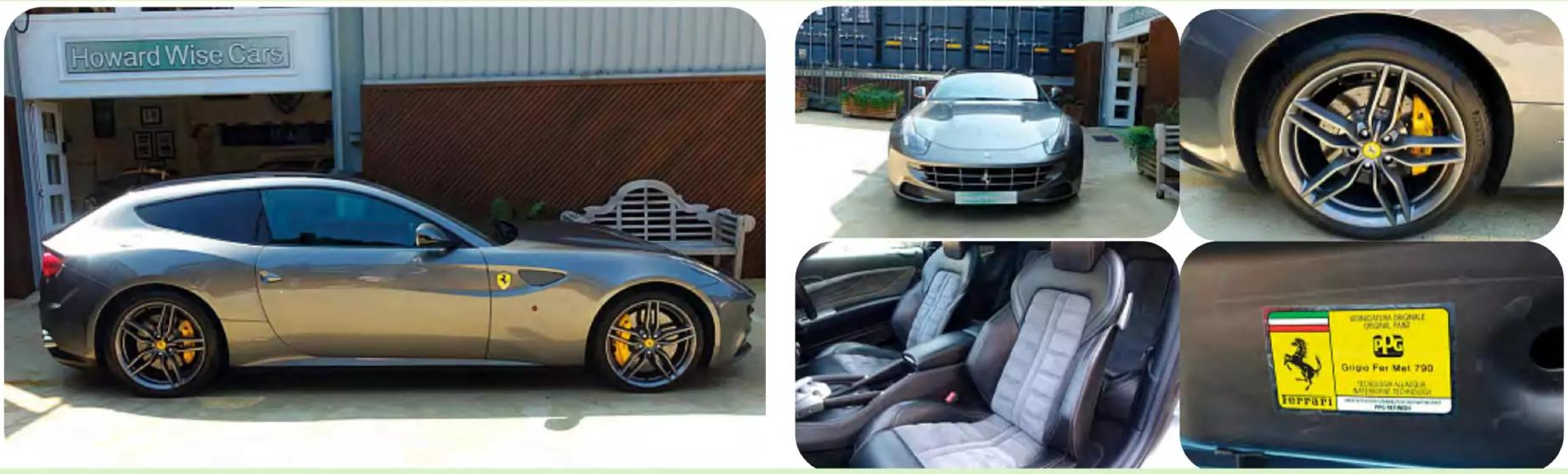
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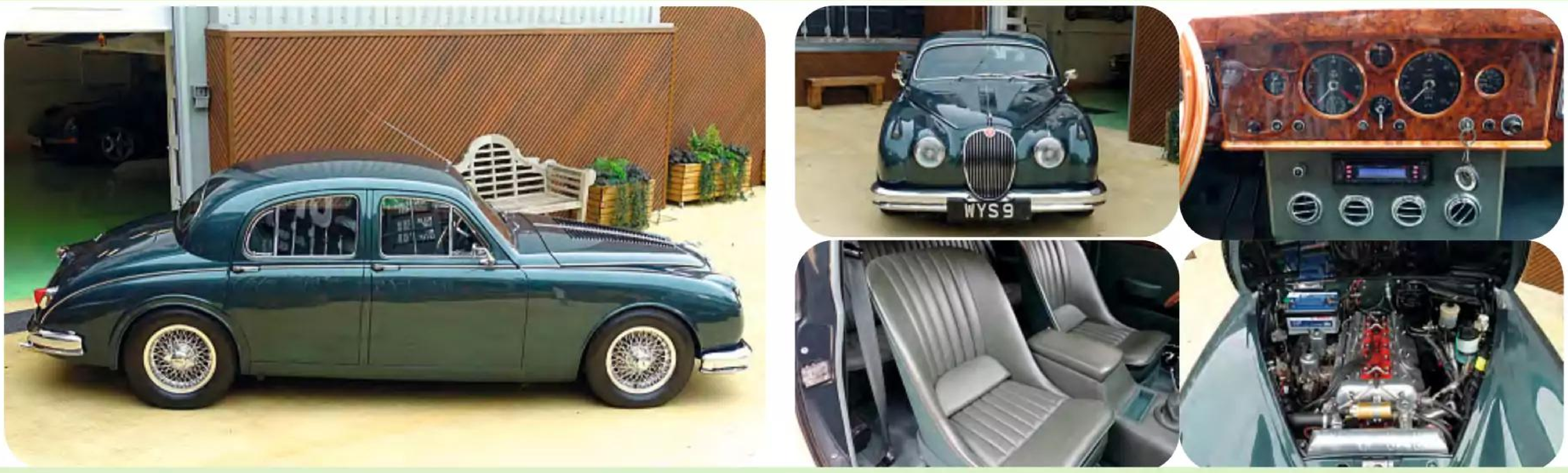

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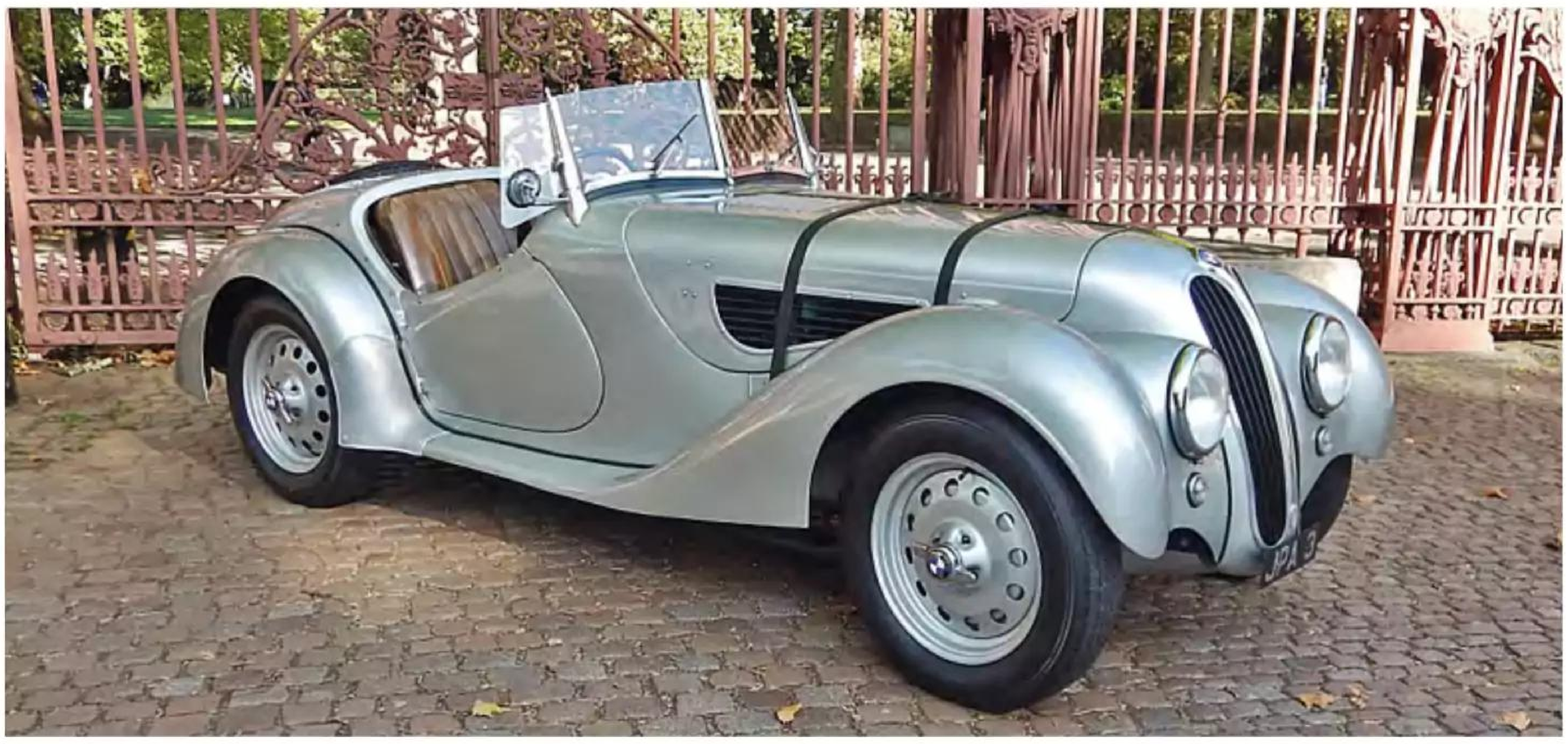

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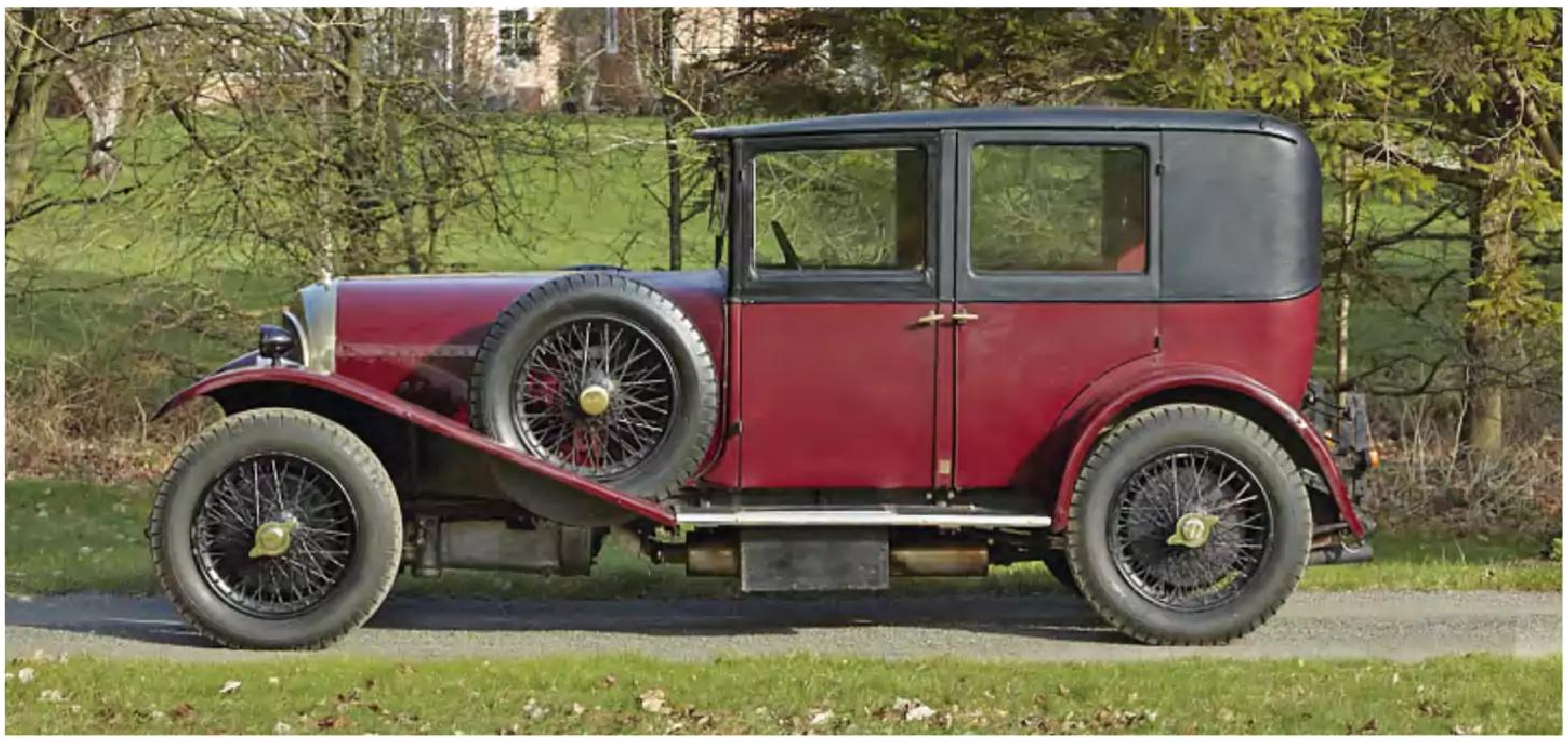

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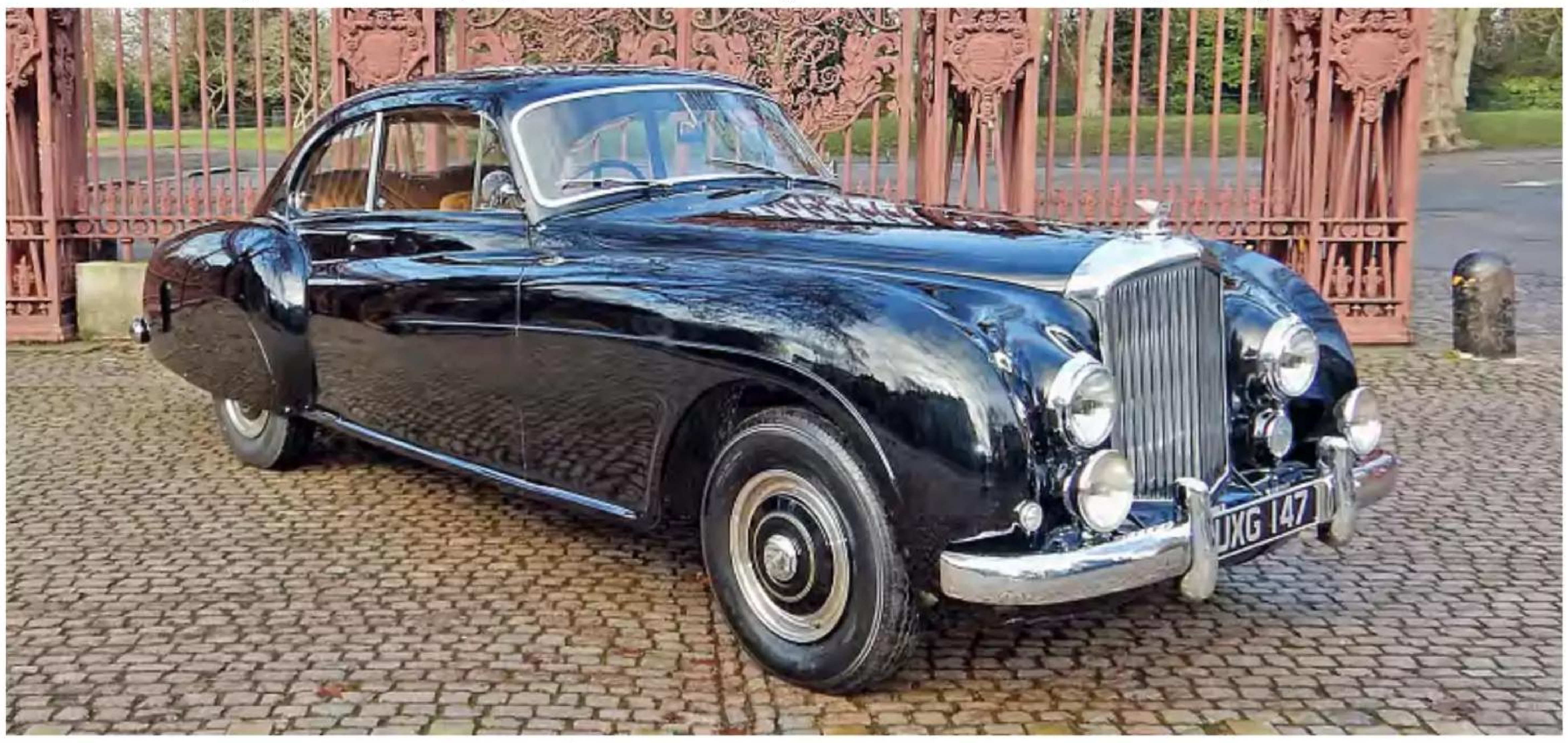

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BRUT FORCE

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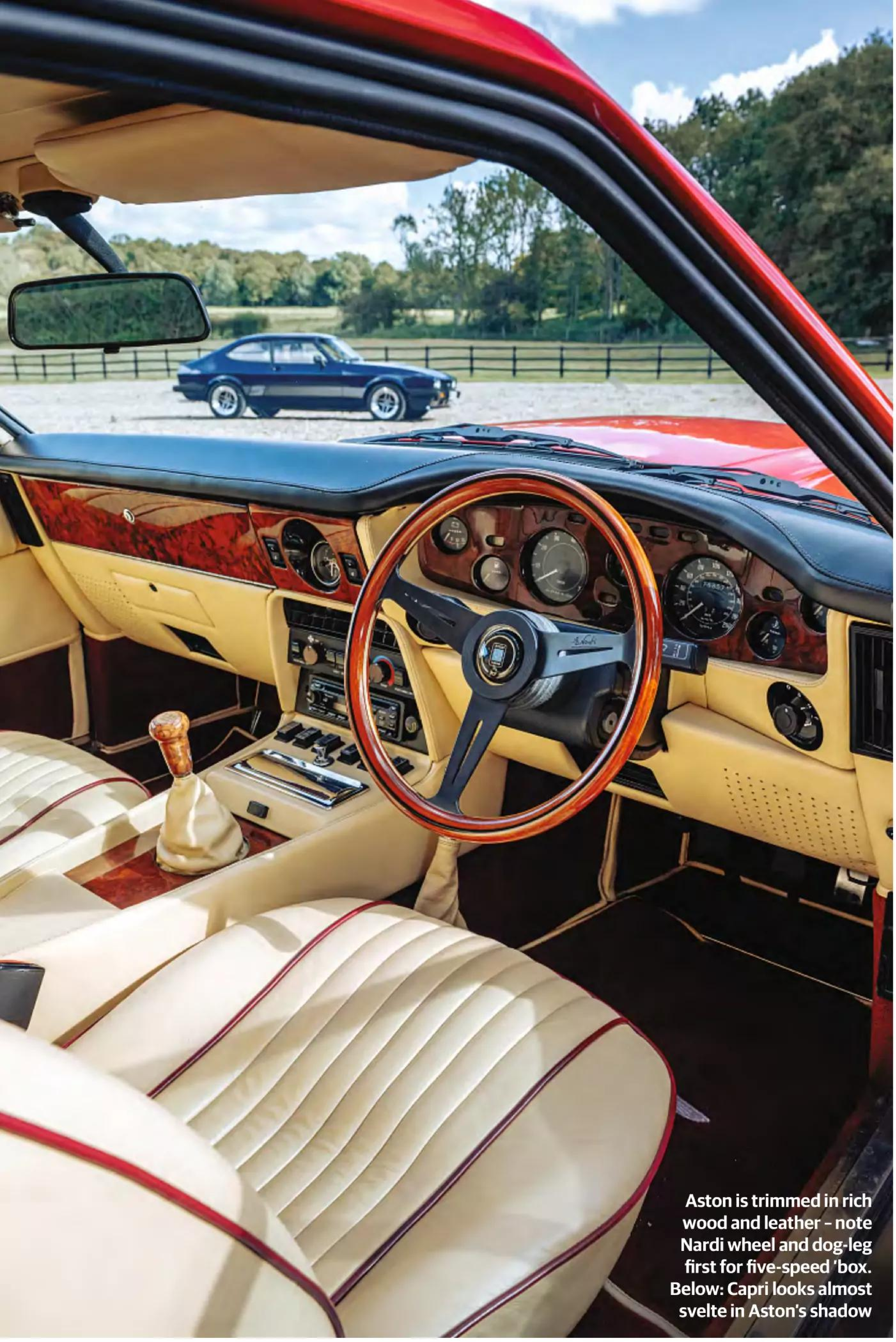
WORDS **PAUL HARDIMAN** PHOTOGRAPHY **JAYSON FONG**



Aston is trimmed in rich wood and leather – note Nardi wheel and dog-leg first for five-speed 'box. Below: Capri looks almost svelte in Aston's shadow

There's a myth about the magic number '432'. Among Aston Martin fans it's associated with the beefiest normally aspirated factory V8 built in its 1986-'89 swansong. But not all X-Packs – denoted by '580X' in their engine number – are equal. In most cases a smidge over 400bhp is your lot, unless it benefitted from the extra carburettor work that in reality few received.

In practice, does it really matter? Among the screaming but torque-light 600bhp V12s of the modern era, can you feel the difference of 20 or 30 real, old-style British horsepower in a near-4000lb, 200bhp-per-tonne car, when it's torque that gets you down the road? I can't. In the real world, it's not so much what it does, but the way it does it, and it's here that around 400lb ft marks its territory. Aim it down a dual carriageway, crank open the octet of Weber butterflies and the whole plot trembles and quivers momentarily before hunkering down, then lifting its nose and launching into a relentless run. And all without changing out of top.

The acceleration builds more strongly as you pass 3500rpm and, rather like the fable of the Vincent Black Shadow, it feels as if it would keep accelerating until the road ran out or it reached the moon, whichever came sooner. That demonstration of sheer might is still exhilarating 40 years later, its indifference to gradient or wind rather putting your insignificance into place. For the record, *Motor* got 168mph from a 'standard' Vantage (about 380bhp and 370lb ft) in 1981, and 5.2 secs to 60mph, and this feels as if it would shade it.

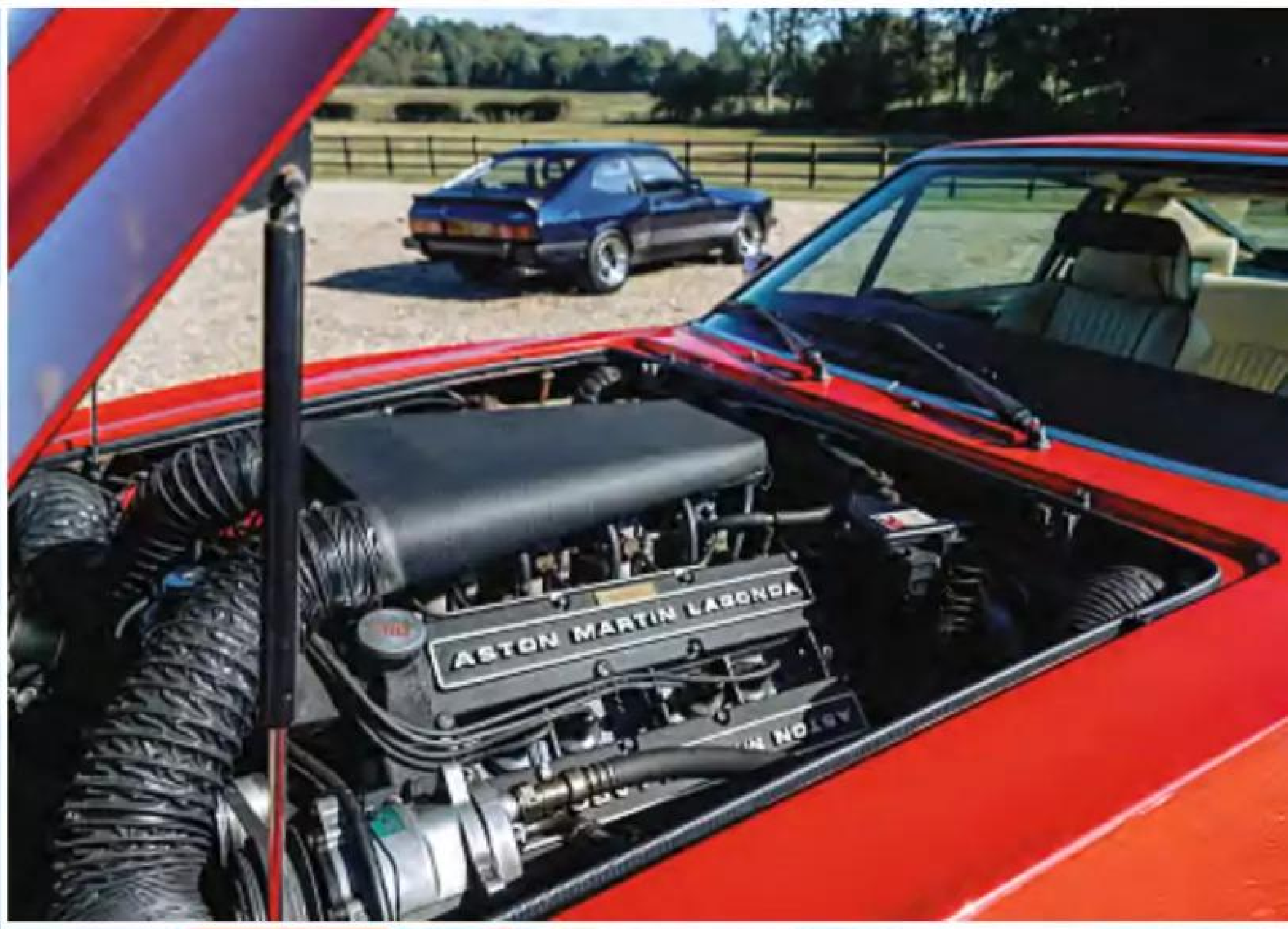
So it has a magnificent motor, handbuilt in Newport Pagnell like all the four-cam, Tadek Marek-designed V8s that starred as the lead act in every Aston from the DBS V8 of 1969 until bowing out at a supercharged 600bhp in the V8 Vantage in 2000. But what else? The Vantage is visually distinguished from regular V8s by the blanked-out grille, ducktail spoiler, enlarged arches and, from 1986, 16in Ronal wheels in place of 15in BBSs, with 255-section tyres. Hot cams and more compression lifted power from the stock V8's 300bhp to 380bhp.

When fuel injection was introduced in the standard V8 from 1986 (reducing the bonnet bulge), the Vantage X-Pack remained on Weber 48IDFs. That resulted in 400bhp-plus via more cylinder-head work, revised cam profiles with different ignition timing and the adoption of lightweight Cosworth pistons. More fettling from Works Service, including opening out the carbs along with larger-diameter manifolding and a freer-breathing exhaust, could up that to 432bhp, mostly fitted to V8 Zagatos. From 1989, Works Service could build you a 450bhp, 6.3-litre version, and independents have found that the motor will go out to 7 litres.

Of the 304 'Series 2' Vantage coupés built, 131 were X-Packs, with a list price of £89k by the end of production in 1989. You could also have the X-Pack engine in the soft-top Volante; many of those were afflicted by the oh-so-'80s big wheelarches and side skirts that managed to look naffer than a Tickford Capri (there's a theme emerging here…), but the coupés mostly

Aston is easy to place thanks to high seat and creases on wings that give a useful sight line. Go easy on the throttle, though

> *'The Aston feels as if it would keep accelerating until the road ran out or it reached the moon, whichever came sooner'*



Clockwise from left: Aston's body roll acts like a safety net to discourage over-enthusiastic driving; 5.3-litre V8 comes alive above 3500rpm; flared arches

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www.roundwood.com | 01435 860 260 | buildings@roundwood.com dodged that bullet and retained their taut elegance. That was still not subtle enough for the then Prince Charles, who ordered his Vantage in stock 'Oscar India' appearance, minting another phrase in Newport Pagnell lexicon: 'Prince of Wales' specification.

In the collector-car world, the Vantage 580X sucks out all the light, its numbers far out of proportion from the strength of its gravitational pull. But there was another 'X-Pack', and it came before the Aston, was better documented and even had actual brochures printed, although fewer were built. And it was a Ford.

'Series X' was a 'performance enhancement' programme available from 1977-'80 through the network of 80 Ford Rallye Sport dealers. Theoretically it was applicable to all cars in the range, but it was mostly applied to big Capris and RS 2000 Escorts. It consisted of a list of options that the dealer could add to a new or used Ford, from more power and better brakes to wider wheels under flared arches, plus interior enhancements. As with a Coombs Jaguar, not all owners ticked all the boxes, but a few became fully loaded with all the goodies.

John Fowle's car is one of these, converted from new in 1980 by its Ford-dealer first owner with all the options except for the auxiliary lights – aka Cibié Oscars, as beloved by rally fans. As well as the extra power from triple Webers and larger valves fitted to the 3.1-litre V6 with which it was specified from new, it has the limited-slip diff, Bilstein struts and dampers, and single-leaf rear springs, along with vented front discs – "basically Granada brakes," says John – big wheelarches, a front airdam and rear spoilers, plus the RS steering wheel. Recaro seats were standard in the 3.0S by 1980, and it had the RS 7.5x13in wheels, but even those looked a little lost under the puffed-out wheelarches so they've been replaced by something a little larger in the same style. Doing so happily widens the tyre choice, although remaining with 225- and 205-section rubber. According to LJK Setright in a 1980 *CAR* road test, Ford originally planned on using 225/60x13s but lost its nerve, and most X-Packs

CAPRI 3·0 X
SERIES

XPK 33
RNV 545V

From top: of the 304 S2 Vantage coupés, 131 were X-Packs; around 100 X-Pack Capris were built; Aston has the more attention-seeking styling

RS steering wheel? Check. Early '80s colour palette? Check. Period seat trim? Er, check. Below: mesh headrests on smart Recaro seats

in period were supplied on 205-section P6s or P7s, the same size as later used on 2.8is (John is pleased that Blockley is now making a 235/60x13). If you ticked all the boxes you added £4500 to the £5250 base price of a 3.0S, and there was even a range of 'sports clothing'.

With the engine mods a 'Series X' Capri could hit 60mph in 7.4 secs and top 130mph, which puts it about on par with the factory-available RS 3100. On par but rarer, with only about 100 reckoned to have been completed against 200 3100s. It was a short-lived offering, superseded and rendered irrelevant by the factory 2.8i appearing in 1981, which incorporated first the suspension and brake mods, and later the limited-slip diff, plus a bit more power via the injected Cologne V6 – and all for £7995.

For all the hype that precedes them, neither X-Pack is intimidating to operate – unless you are nervous about the handmade aluminium Aston costing as much as your house. Its controls are all weighty, for sure, and the sense is heightened by the five-speed ZF 'box having long throws. It doesn't feel massive from the inside, though, and is easy to place from a fairly high seating position thanks to the wing-top creases visible at all corners. It's a dog-leg first gear, and the long travel slows the action compared with the Capri's exemplary shift, helping the synchromesh to work well.

Various anachronisms remain, such as the fly-off handbrake next to the transmission tunnel and the hard-to-find window switches (they're on the centre of the dashboard, each side of the centrally mounted clock; winding your own in the Capri comes as light relief). In both cars, the slabby dashboards reflect their original 1968 architecture.

The Aston Martin is surprisingly wieldy for what looks like a big, heavy car. The 255-section Michelin Pilots hang on well, but press on and the body leans more than you would expect – but that's probably a good thing to help curb the enthusiasm. You're not aware of the back wheels being connected, except perhaps in the manifestation of excellent traction, but the de Dion arrangement improves the ride over a live axle because the weight of the differential is borne by the chassis instead of describing weighty kinematics not far from your backside. It's generally very mechanical, with plenty of gear, bearing and diff noises going on underneath, but it's well subdued thanks to lots of cabin insulation and thick carpeting to complement the leather and wood. Even the headlining is hand-trimmed, and the bonnet is well insulated, too; it's surprising how tappety the handbuilt V8 sounds when you lift the lid to gaze upon its magnificence.

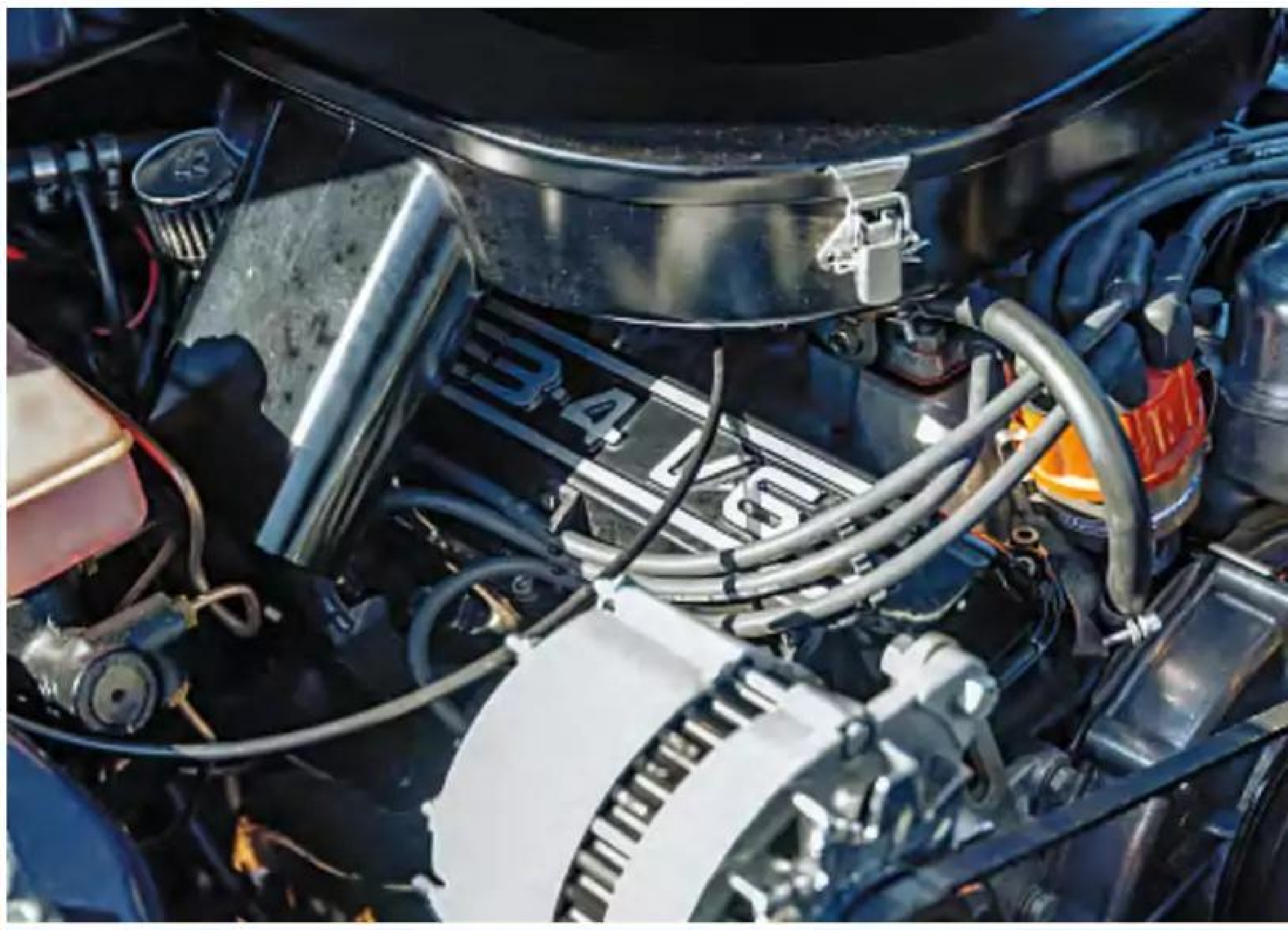
The elephant in the room is that alleged enormous 580X prod, lurking behind a longish throttle travel, which is probably intentional just to keep the thing in check. It woofles away happily in the lower registers, louder from the outside than in, but above 3500rpm it has much more to give if you ask it. From there things start to get rapid and just a little unnerving in the sheer relentnessness. Luckily, the fairly heavy brake pedal provides serious retardation for the near two-tonne plot (once it's full of fuel and passengers), even though you have to press it a bit harder to get more serious bite.

After that, the Capri can only feel a little less

Capri offers great steering and good body control, but the brakes could do with more bite

> *‘If you ticked all the boxes, you added £4500 to the £5250 base price of a 3.0S, and there was even a range of sports clothing’*

CAPRI 3.0 X
RNV 545V



Clockwise from left: Janspeed exhaust gives V6 an enhanced timbre; 3.4-litre motor is by Ric Wood; RS-spec 13s have been swapped for wider wheels stellar, if more accessible: the cabin is narrower (yet overall the car isn't significantly, because of those wide arches), but you flop deep into the Recaros so judging where the front finishes is harder. The RS leather-trimmed wheel is nicer to hold than the hard, wood-rimmed Nardi in the Aston, and we can forgive the chocolate-brown vinyl interior trim edging the very '80s orange-check cloth seat inserts because, John says, it was the only colour available in 1980.

Outside, the large, flat-sided extra wheelarch panels are so straight and ripple-free that you wouldn't believe they are glassfibre, and they are not just slip-over parts. No doubt with heart in mouth, your friendly RS dealer would cut most of the bottoms out of the wings before grafting on the new panels, though John's car benefits from having them properly bonded and matted on before painting, rather than riveted, by glassfibre/paint specialist Option 1 (*The specialist,* April 2009).

As with the Aston, the complex carburetion doesn't hamper starting, cold or hot (Ferrari owners take note), and there's an instant Essex rumble, enhanced by a Janspeed exhaust. Well, it would have been rude not to… John's car now has a 3.4-litre Ric Wood engine, but it's been detuned from 205bhp closer to the 175bhp of an original X-Pack. It's smooth, unlike an Essex in its raw state, and spins quite happily, needing 3000rpm for 70mph – although, being a 'six', it sounds busier than it is and is past its best by 5500rpm. John has resisted the usual 'upgrade' to the much heavier Type 9 five-speed 'box as used in the later 2.8i (and lots of other Fords, from Sierra to Transit), and the change is both light and accurate in the close, four-speed gate.

The steering, powered as standard on the 3.0S, is lighter and sharper, and the car turns in more eagerly, with less roll than the Aston. Control inputs can be not quite so deliberate; it's a car you can drive with less muscle, yielding more immediate changes of direction. It gives away 200bhp to the Vantage but is more than half a tonne lighter, so the performance differential is not as wide as you might expect. The ride can never be as relaxed, but from point to point on twisty roads the Aston would struggle to get away from it – for as long as it stayed in brakes. Capris up to the 2.8i famously used the same solid discs on all models from 1600 to 3-litre; the vented items here are an improvement but remain only adequate, with a reassuringly firm pedal but no extra bite like the Aston when you push harder. John's car exhibits the usual Capri slight brake vibration even on light applications, and AP four-pots clasping bigger discs may be next on the menu.

'The Capri gives away 200bhp to the Vantage but is lighter, so the performance differential isn't as wide as expected'

So here's the big question: which would you take home? The Capri does almost everything the Aston can at something like a sixth of the price. It's rarer yet easier to live with, especially in terms of maintenance costs. As investments, fast Fords have been increasingly popular in the past couple of years, while Astons have struggled at auction, like almost everything else – but there has been some recent recovery.

A straight fight between these two pinnacles of 1980s British rear-drive desirability is meaningless – any more than comparing Huntsman and Primark, only to establish that both make perfectly serviceable clothes. The Aston goes about its business under a carefully distilled but constant air of old-world quality, while the Capri just does it like it says on the tin – with an added glint of menace. It's ironic that Ford would one day own Aston Martin, but these very individual fast coupés come from places of glorious divergence.

***Thanks to** Dylan Miles (dylan-miles.com), where the Aston Martin is for sale; Pearce's Farmshop & Café (pearcesfarmshop.com)*

ASTON MARTIN V8 VANTAGE X-PACK

Sold/number built 1986-'89/137
Construction steel chassis, aluminium outer panels over steel body frame
Engine all-alloy, dohc-per-bank 5340cc V8, four Weber 48IDF carburettors
Max power 400-432bhp @ 6200-6250rpm
Max torque 390-395lb ft @ 5000-5100rpm
Transmission five-speed manual, RWD via LSD
Suspension: front independent, by double wishbones, anti-roll bar **rear** de Dion axle, four links, Watt linkage; coil springs, telescopic dampers f/r
Steering power-assisted rack and pinion
Brakes vented discs, inboard at rear, with twin servos
Length 15ft 3¾in (4667mm)
Width 6ft 2½in (1890mm)
Height 4ft 4¼in (1327mm)
Wheelbase 8ft 6¾in (2610mm)
Weight 4012lb (1820kg)
0-60mph 5.2 secs
Top speed 172mph **Mpg** 13.4
Price new £87,000 (Vantage, 1988)
Price now £250-350,000

FORD CAPRI 3.0S X-PACK

Sold/number built 1977-'80/c100
Construction steel monocoque
Engine all-iron, ohv 2994-3094cc V6, triple dual-choke 42DCNF Weber carburettors
Max power 175bhp @ 5000rpm
Max torque 194lb ft @ 4000rpm
Transmission four-speed manual, RWD via LSD
Suspension: front independent, by MacPherson struts, anti-roll bar **rear** live axle, single-leaf springs, staggered telescopic dampers
Steering power-assisted rack and pinion
Brakes ventilated discs front, drums rear, with servo
Length 14ft 6¾in (4439mm)
Width 6ft 1in (1854mm)
Height 4ft 4in (1323mm)
Wheelbase 8ft 5in (2565mm)
Weight 2650lb (1202kg)
0-60mph 7.4 secs
Top speed 132mph **Mpg** 22
Price new £4594 (3.0S, 1978)
Price now £35-60,000

PREACHING TO THE CONVERSION

Ford's Capri lent itself to tuning, customisation and specials. Here is a selection of the most extraordinary

WORDS & IMAGERY **RICHARD HESELTINE**

It may have been 'the car you always promised yourself', but the Ford Capri was a mere blank canvas to many a tuner, customiser or coachbuilder. Production at Halewood, Merseyside, began in November 1968 and in Cologne, Germany, a month later ahead of the launch at the Brussels motor show in January 1969. Despite it being a car of which seemingly endless permutations of engine size and trim level were available, there were still niches begging to be filled – even if they weren't immediately obvious.

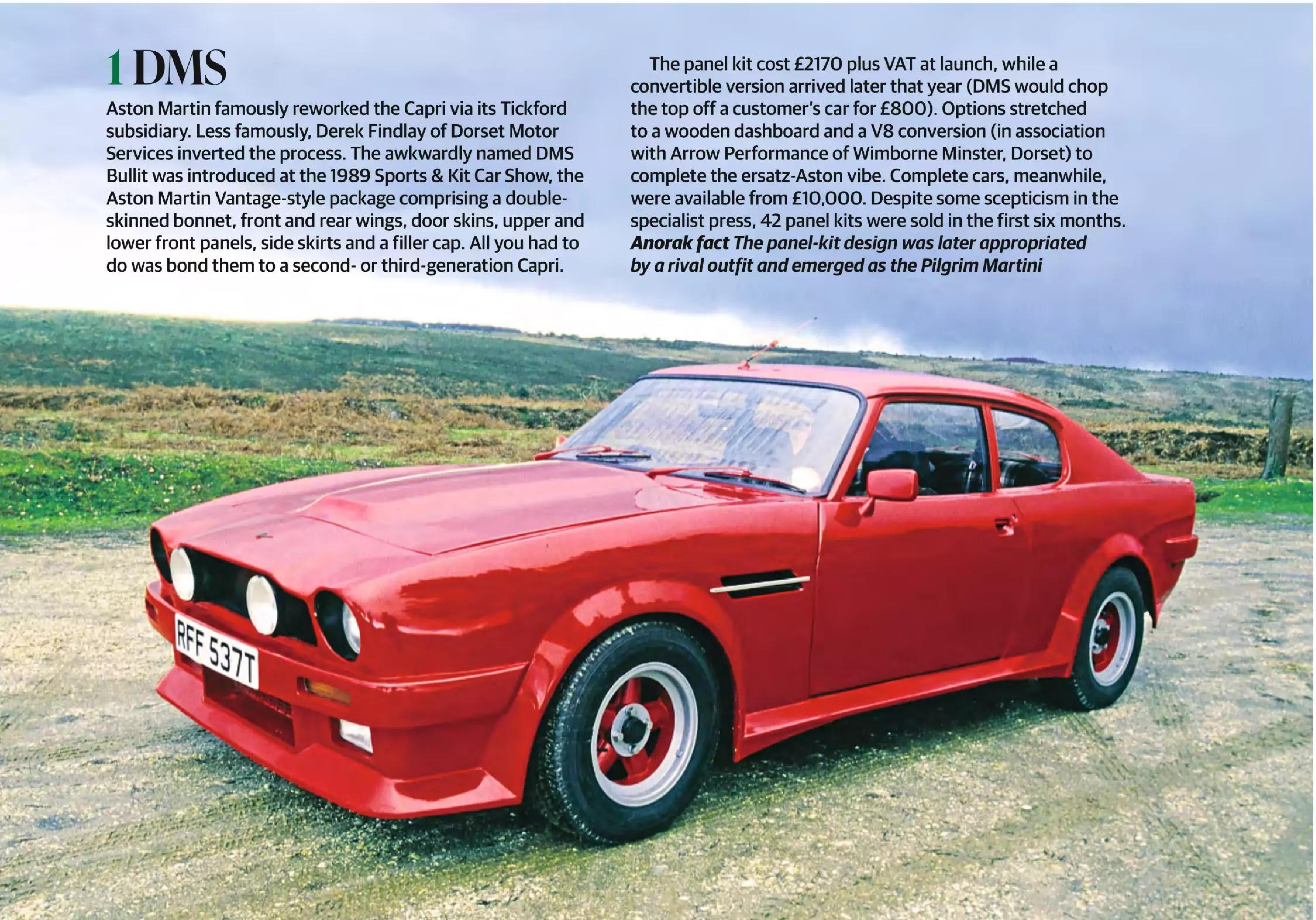
The Capri was on sale for only a few months before roofs were removed, motors were swapped and add-ons were added. Gathered here are 10 examples of the everyman GT that went under the knife, received a transplant or underwent a makeover in period. Some are relatively well-known, others rather less so. There are also a few jokers in the pack for no other reason than to provide comic relief…

1 DMS

Aston Martin famously reworked the Capri via its Tickford subsidiary. Less famously, Derek Findlay of Dorset Motor Services inverted the process. The awkwardly named DMS Bullit was introduced at the 1989 Sports & Kit Car Show, the Aston Martin Vantage-style package comprising a double-skinned bonnet, front and rear wings, door skins, upper and lower front panels, side skirts and a filler cap. All you had to do was bond them to a second- or third-generation Capri.

The panel kit cost £2170 plus VAT at launch, while a convertible version arrived later that year (DMS would chop the top off a customer's car for £800). Options stretched to a wooden dashboard and a V8 conversion (in association with Arrow Performance of Wimborne Minster, Dorset) to complete the ersatz-Aston vibe. Complete cars, meanwhile, were available from £10,000. Despite some scepticism in the specialist press, 42 panel kits were sold in the first six months.

***Anorak fact** The panel-kit design was later appropriated by a rival outfit and emerged as the Pilgrim Martini*



2 Crayford

Given the firm's status as the king of the 'chop-top' during the 1960s and '70s, it was perhaps inevitable that Crayford Auto Developments would produce a Capri convertible. That said, the Kent outfit labelled the Caprice a cabriolet when it was announced in October 1969. All variants, from 1.3-litre base models to V6 range-toppers, could be accommodated, with a 3000E-based version costing more than a new Jaguar E-type. However, unlike most of the firm's output, roof-removal surgery was undertaken by Crayford's German partner, Karl Deutsch of Cologne.

As many as 37 cars were converted, most being sold via Bristol Street Motors. Yet the Caprice wasn't the only Crayford Capri of the period. The firm also introduced the Exterminator at the British International Motor Show in 1969. It retained its roof, but gained go-faster stripes, a none-too-subtle bonnet scoop and a small-block V8. According to the firm's co-founder, David McMullan, 30 Exterminators were exported to Spain.

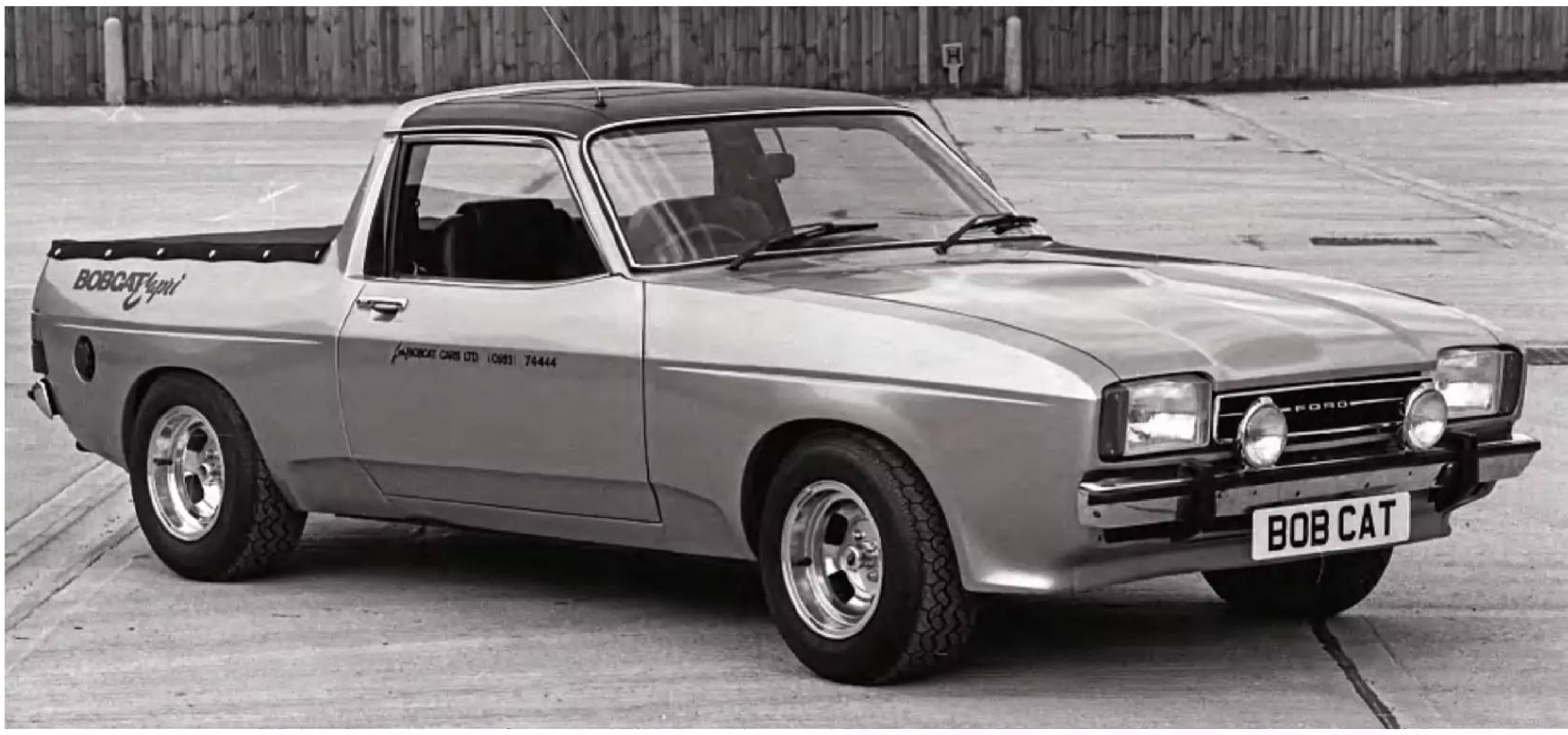
***Anorak fact** Unlike Abbott's conversion (p89), the Crayford Caprice employed a flat rear deck – although the door frames were retained on cost grounds*

3 Broadspeed

Ralph Broad was variously a motor trader and a race-preparation ace. The brilliant – if potty-mouthed – Midlander began offering hot-rod Capris in 1969, initially with a 2-litre, four-cylinder unit fed by three Weber 34DCS carbs. Early cars were identifiable over their stock brethren thanks to two-tone paint, fat Minilite wheels, recessed front numberplates, lights from the Ford Escort Twin Cam and front indicators from a Rover 3500 V8. From there, Broad began playing around with V6s – the Bullit edition was displayed at the Racing Car Show, Olympia, in January 1971.

Based on the 3000E, there were umpteen permutations, the Stage 2 edition boasting trick cylinder heads, a high-lift cam and so on. According to *Motor Sport*, it was capable of 0-60mph in 7.2 secs (compared with the standard car's 10.2 secs). Broad then began playing around with forced induction – although Swiss engineer Peter May was the first to offer a turbo Capri. The turbocharged Bullit (above) arrived in 1972, with as many as 15 cars subsequently being converted.

***Anorak fact** Bullit was a nod to the film, Bullitt. Tuned four-cylinder cars were referred to internally as 'Mini-Bullits', although the moniker wasn't officially adopted*



4 Bobcat

This pick-up conversion began as an after-hours project by Thoroughbred Sports Cars of Witney, Oxfordshire. In 1980 the firm took a Mk1 Capri and chopped the back off it. Such was the reaction, a second ute was built on a Capri II donor (as pictured here), and it was marketed as the Bobcat from 1981.

Aft of the doors, a stressed, prefabricated metal structure was added to form the internal part of the pick-up area, with its floor and sides clad in steel. The flared wings and the tailgate, meanwhile, were moulded from glassfibre.

According to PR material of the period, Bobcats would be built on one- or two-year-old Capris, with prices starting at £3950 in 1981 for a four-cylinder version – a 3-litre truck could have been yours for upwards of £4500. Optional extras included air conditioning, custom paint and a small-block V8. According to a snippet in *Alternative Cars*, the Bobcat was capable of 168mph when thus equipped, which seems a mite optimistic. The project soon fizzled out.

***Anorak fact** Legend has it that the original 'work truck' that inspired the Bobcat was based on a Jeff Uren-converted V8 Capri*

SUPERFORMANCE
DOD
BP
Basil van Rooyen

5 Perana

Several firms produced V8 Capris, from Race Proved and Super Speed to less well promoted outfits such as Auto Power Services. By far the most lauded, though, was the Perana edition created by South Africa's Basil Green. Strictly speaking, there was more than one strain (he first inserted V6s into the space where V4s once resided).

The V8 model was produced from 1970-'72, with 3000XL donor cars receiving a 5-litre Windsor small-block engine. This was allied to a Mustang's TopLoader transmission and a Falcon XW rear axle, which received a limited-slip diff. Distinct from other ostensibly similar conversions, the Perana was adopted as an official Ford product and sold through the dealer network in its homeland. Around 400 were made.

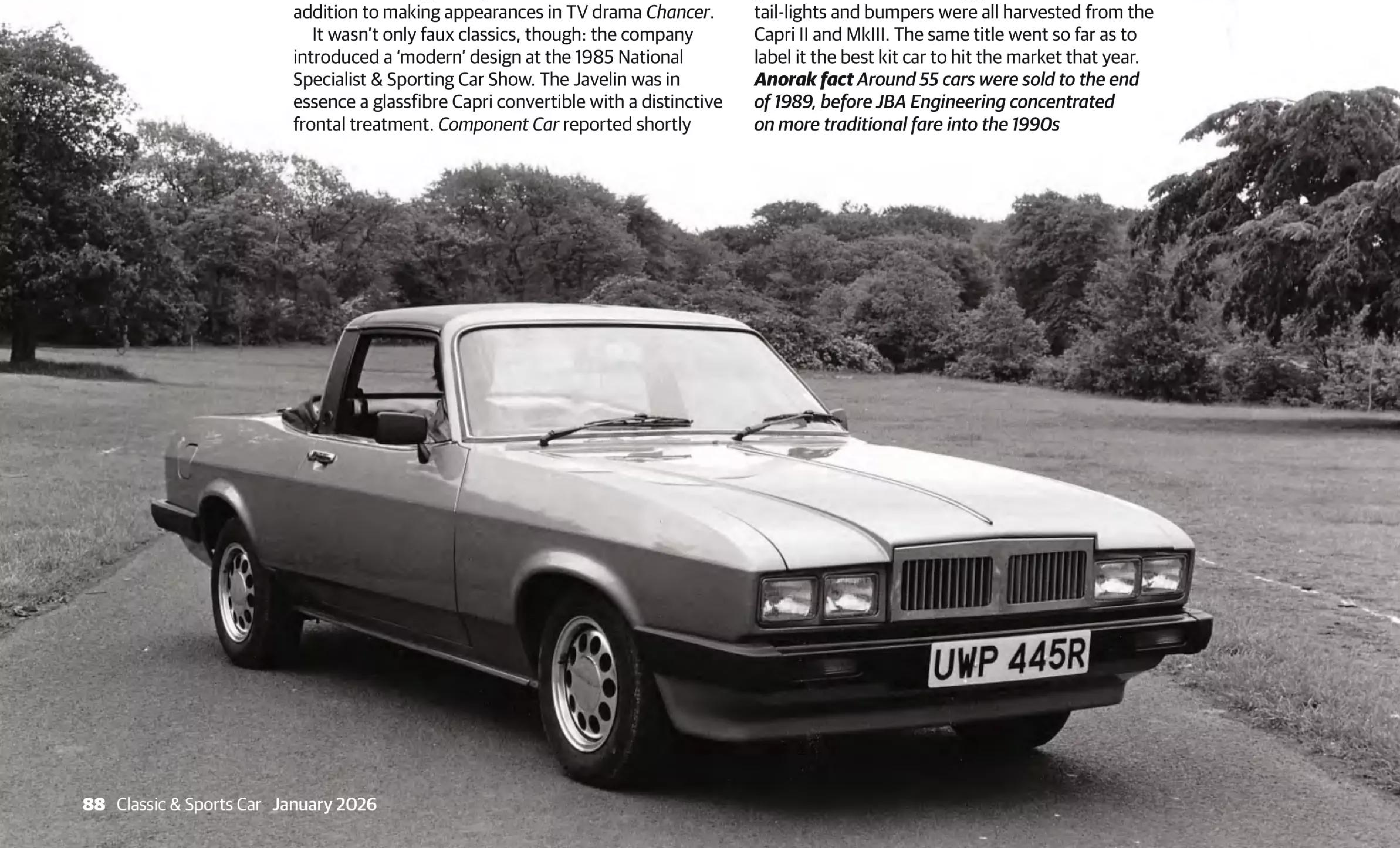
***Anorak fact** Basil van Rooyen (pictured) campaigned a Perana with great success. In a roundabout way, it led to him conceiving a rivalling, V8-engined Vauxhall Firenza*

6 JBA Engineering

JBA Engineering was one of the giants of the British kit-car industry during the 1980s and beyond. At one point, it produced 15 kits per month, two of which were earmarked for export. Its 1930s-style roadsters were widely lauded, appearing on the cover of *Autocar* in addition to making appearances in TV drama *Chancer*.

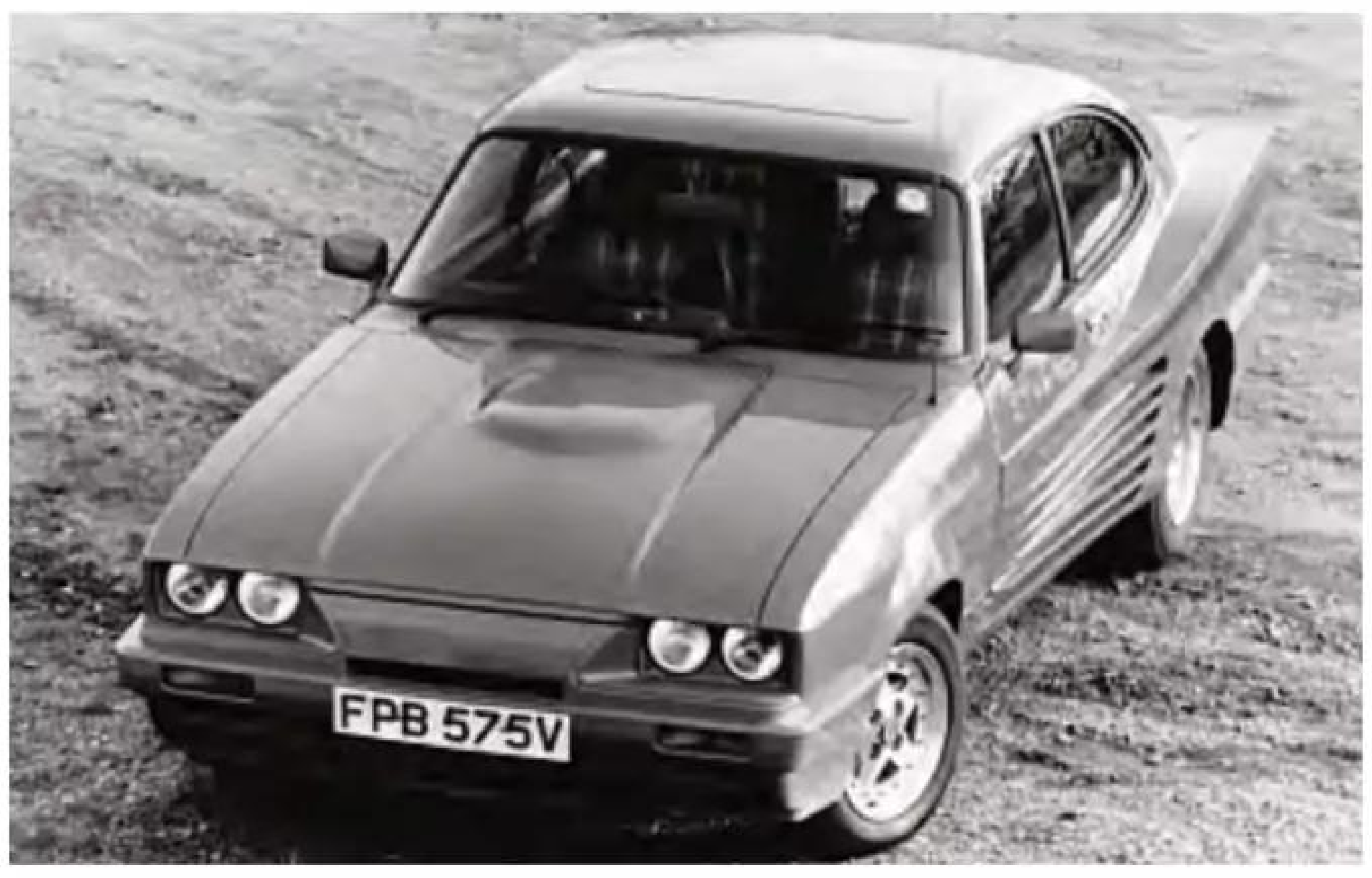
It wasn't only faux classics, though: the company introduced a 'modern' design at the 1985 National Specialist & Sporting Car Show. The Javelin was in essence a glassfibre Capri convertible with a distinctive frontal treatment. *Component Car* reported shortly after the big reveal: 'The Javelin is a brave move for such a young company… JBA offers the Javelin as a fully comprehensive body/chassis unit for £1950 plus VAT, including the complete chassis, body, roof panels, GRP grille, heater boxes and JBA badges. The choice of rear hood or hardtop, Cibié front lights and a chrome grille are extra.' The running gear, doors, windscreen, tail-lights and bumpers were all harvested from the Capri II and MkIII. The same title went so far as to label it the best kit car to hit the market that year.

***Anorak fact** Around 55 cars were sold to the end of 1989, before JBA Engineering concentrated on more traditional fare into the 1990s*



7 LuMo

While now long-forgotten, LuMo was once a major player in the world of go-faster Fords. The performance wing of the Luton Motor Company beat the Blue Oval to the punch in offering a V6 Capri when it inserted a 2994cc unit from a Zodiac into the 2000GT in 1969. To begin with, there was no 'standard' conversion as such, more a mix 'n' match approach with various engine enhancements offered alongside 'visual tuning' trinkets. Things had become a bit more standardised by 1972, when *Hot Car* tested the 3000GT-based LuMo 180, the numerical designation denoting its brake horsepower at the flywheel. It praised the performance, stating: 'Anybody who says the V6 isn't smooth should try this car. Right up to 7000rpm it sung sweet music and never sounded strained.' As an aside, LuMo backed Mick Hill's successful V8 Capri Super Saloon racer.
***Anorak fact** LuMo also offered the Cortina 1600E and Capri 1600GT with a Lotus Twin Cam engine*



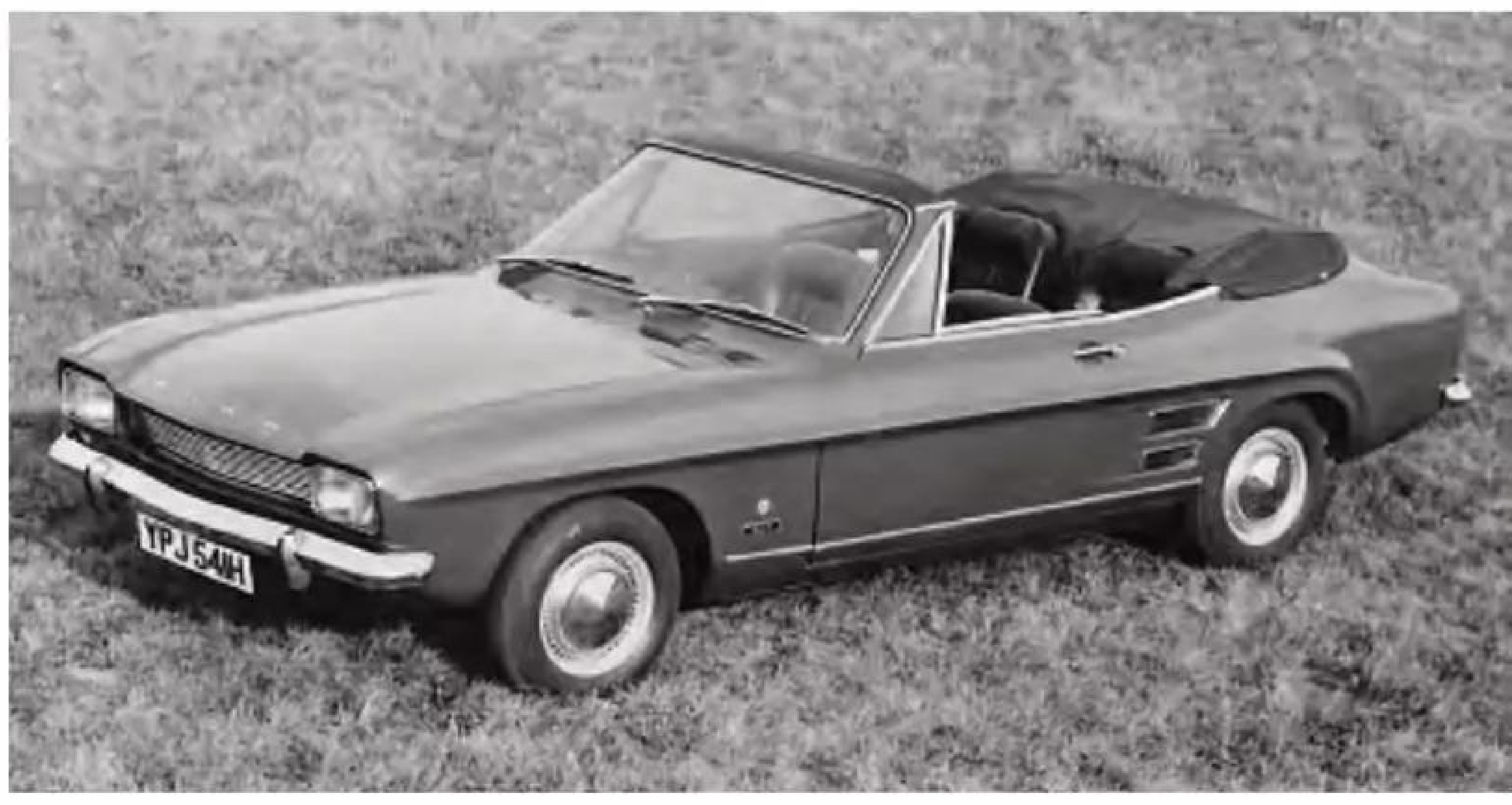
8 Auto Motiv

The 1980s witnessed the emergence of the bodykit: glassfibre trinkets that were seemingly everywhere in Europe. This offering from Auto Motiv Bodystyling blurred the lines between decorative add-ons and kit car. The Surrey firm was among the first to bring a Peugeot 205 GTI bodykit to market, along with ostensibly similar sets for then-current hot hatches, all of which made the arrival of this radically reworked Capri at the 1985 London Motorfair all the more surprising.

For £950 plus VAT, customers would have received glassfibre panels with Ferrari Testarossa-like side strakes and a 'droop snoot' nose. They were supplied in white gelcoat and attached to the existing steel by means of 'aircraft fixings', according to AMB's promotional material.
***Anorak fact** One such kit was applied to a Capri transformed into a convertible by SMS Conversions of Liverpool*

9 Allard

A legendary name in Britain's cottage industry of specialist marques, Allard had morphed into a performance-upgrade affair under second-generation principal Alan Allard. The family had form when it came to supercharging, having acquired the rights to Chris Shorrock's eponymous blower. As such, umpteen Fords benefitted from such enhancements, including the 3-litre Capri seen below. This 1972 offering in 'Stage 1' tune was evaluated by *Autosport*, which enthused about a 0-60mph dash in sub-6 secs (the magazine reckoned it was good for more than 140mph with the correct gearing). Cars could be converted by Allard in three days, although aftermarket kits were also available.
***Anorak fact** Alan Allard was a turbocharging pioneer, having written the one-time definitive text on the subject. Ford Capris with forced induction inevitably followed*



10 ED Abbott

Farnham-based ED Abbott made the leap from producing coachbuilt bodies to working with manufacturers on volume builds. It became particularly well known for its work with Ford during the 1950s and '60s via its various estate-car offerings. However, it was clearly hurting by the time this ragtop Capri was introduced in 1969. The Blue Oval was bringing more work in-house, and that meant ED Abbott was forced to take stock. Its Capri conversion was not a factory-sanctioned model. The design retained some of the donor car's rear buttresses, but the door frames were removed for a cleaner line. Despite an apparent order for 50 cars from a main dealer, production of the Abbott Capri remained in single digits. The firm was shuttered in 1972.
***Anorak fact** Ford commissioned Carbodies to build two Capri convertibles; one was destroyed in an accident almost immediately*

An unexpected journey

This glorious 250 Europa GT was conceived for touring, but has spent much of its life in competition – and it's hungry for more

WORDS **SIMON HUCKNALL** PHOTOGRAPHY **JACK HARRISON**

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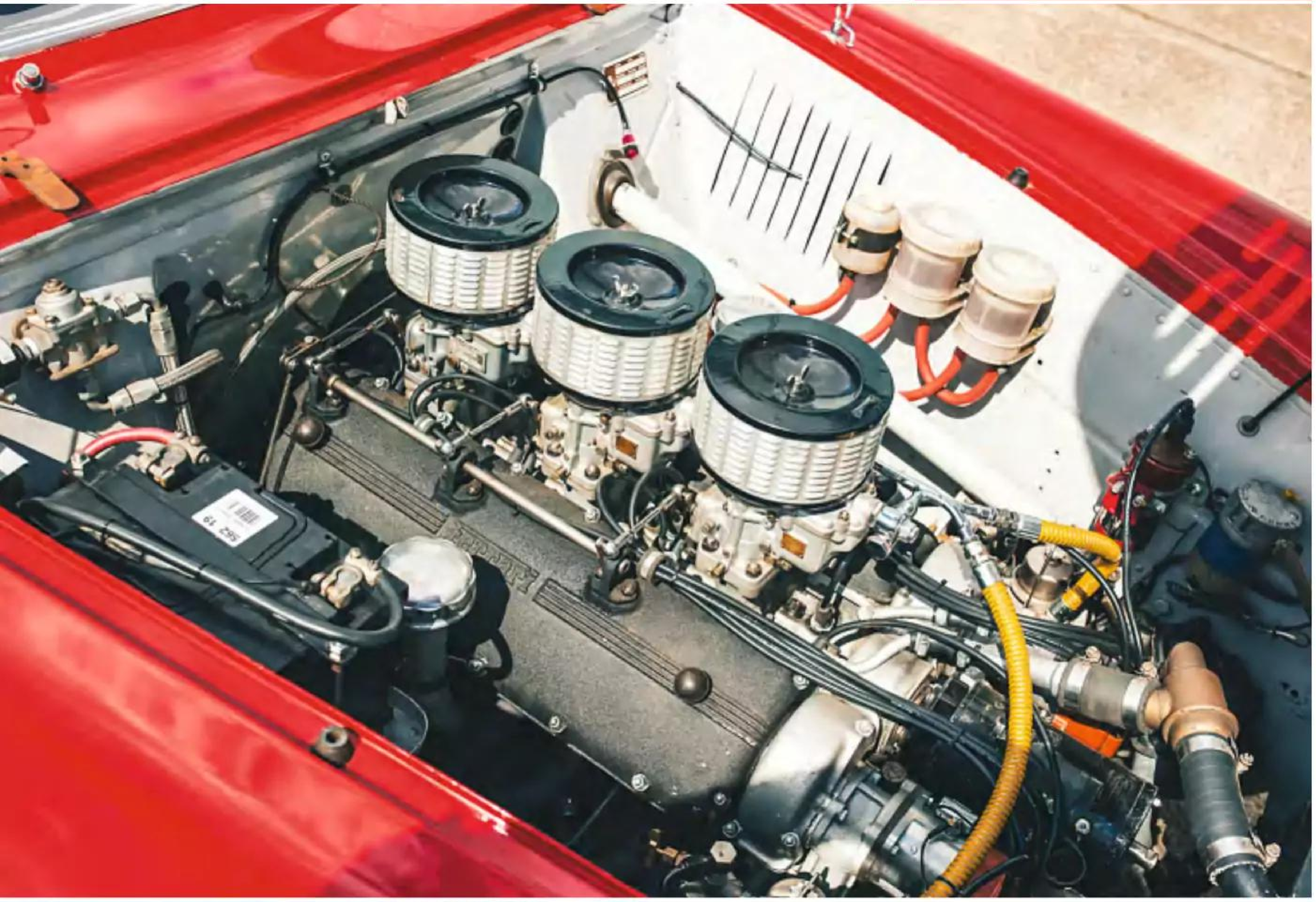

From top: quick-release catches; original V12 was found in 2018 – its plugs hide awkwardly in the vee; mesh grilles protect front lights from stones

Above: protective mesh on headlight lenses, too. Right: Rosso Corsa paint replaced the factory grey during the Ferrari's 1990s restoration

“I sell you an engine, the rest you get for free.” If Enzo Ferrari really did say that to an irate customer – the story and precise words are open to conjecture – then he may well have been talking about the 'short-block' Colombo V12 that in Tipo 112 form powers this 1955 250 Europa GT. It was, for Ferrari, a genuinely transformative engine that would see service in all of the 250-series greats, SWB, GTO, Tour de France and Lusso included.

The Europa in its second showing, as here, was also a breakthrough model. It became the first '250GT', which, through all its iterations, ran for nearly a decade, taking Ferrari from a bespoke sports-car maker to a coveted prize fought over by Ford and Fiat. The fact that this example achieved a podium finish in period, driven by one of the world's greatest sports-car drivers in perhaps the most gruelling road-race of all, makes piloting it today a rare privilege.

We'll return to chassis 0373GT's race history shortly, but it's first worth understanding why the 250 Europa GT was such a key template for future Ferraris. Its design was influenced by the 375 America, introduced at the Paris Salon in 1953. Most Americas were supplied with Pinin Farina's three- or five-window coupé body sitting on a long (for a Ferrari) 2800mm wheelbase, and Aurelio Lampredi's 4.5-litre V12 provided the muscle. Only a dozen were built, but it was a promising nod to the flourishing US market. The first 250 Europa was launched the same year with a Vignale body, although most production cars were sold with Pinin Farina coachwork. This model was powered by a smaller, 3-litre Lampredi V12, and 22 were sold in its 10-month run.

The 250GT dynasty started the following year, though, when Ferrari showed a heavily revised 250 Europa at the 1954 Paris Salon. Again the design was reminiscent of the 375 America and the outgoing Europa (in Pinin Farina guise), but the wheelbase was reduced to a more Ferrari-typical 2600mm. This was enabled by a switch to Gioacchino Colombo's all-alloy, 2953cc 60° V12, which had a shorter block length and was also seen in the 250MM. Unlike the Lampredi unit, Colombo's V12 used more conventional push-fit liners and a head gasket for a more compact motor overall. The masterfully executed design employed single overhead camshafts per bank, operating two valves per cylinder. A 73mm bore and 58.8mm stroke suggested a more rev-hungry engine than Lampredi's 68x68mm 'square' unit, and while its wet sump pointed more towards road use than racing, it made 217bhp at 7000rpm – enough for a 142mph top speed.

Now categorised as chassis type 508, the new 250 Europa's front and rear tracks each grew by 29mm, but the basic design of its predecessor's platform remained: two longitudinal tubes with outriggers to support the body, although this time they ran above rather than below the live rear axle. Front independent suspension

'A "GT" suffix applied to the Europa name, followed by a change to "250GT", began the most eulogised series of the classic Ferrari era'

was by double wishbones, lever-type Houdaille hydraulic shock absorbers and a transverse leaf spring (as in 'our' car, but coils were used further down the line), with semi-elliptics suspending the rear axle.

Ferrari did not initially see fit to rename the 250 Europa, which must have led to some confusion given the original's engineering overhaul. But soon after its Paris debut a 'GT' suffix was applied to the 250 Europa name, followed by a further change to '250GT', beginning the most eulogised model series of the classic Ferrari era. Other than one car built by Vignale for Princess Liliane de Réthy of Belgium, all other 250GT coupés used Pinin Farina bodies, with the *carrozzeria* also looking after their manufacture. Of the 35 GT chassis built, 28 were coupés made in either steel or aluminium, with at least one configured as a two-plus-two, while others featured an upholstered luggage platform, as here.

Which is no surprise, given 0373GT's original reason for being. According to Gianni Rogliatti's 1992 book, *Ferrari Ecurie Garage Francorchamps*, the car – originally in grey with burgundy leather trim – was sold in 1955 by the Belgian concessionaire to Philippe Washer, a well-known tennis player. The Ferrari was 'completely standard, suitable for touring with its relatively docile engine and 100-litre fuel tank', although its output is quoted as 212bhp at 7200rpm, slightly down on Ferrari's figures.

FERRARI 250 EUROPA GT

Sold/number built 1954-'55/35
Construction multi-tubular steel chassis frame, steel or aluminium body
Engine all-alloy, sohc-per-bank 2953cc V12, three twin-choke Weber 36DCF or 42DCZ carburettors
Max power 217bhp @ 7000rpm
Max torque n/a
Transmission four-speed manual, RWD
Suspension: front independent, by unequal-length wishbones, transverse leaf or coil springs **rear** live axle, single radius arm, semi-elliptic leaf springs; lever-arm dampers f/r
Steering worm and sector
Brakes drums
Length 14ft 7¼in (4450mm)
Width 5ft 5in (1650mm)
Height 4ft (1219mm)
Wheelbase 8ft 6in (2600mm)
Weight 2315lb (1050kg, dry)
0-60mph n/a
Top speed 142mph **Mpg** n/a
Price new n/a **Price now** £2m

Washer was the cousin of racing driver Olivier Gendebien, so it was inevitable that 'Jellybean' – as he was known – would cross paths with Washer's new toy. Gendebien, a Belgian aristocrat and war hero, made his racing debut with a Jaguar MkVII in the 1952 Liège-Rome-Liège road race and built an impressive reputation as a skilled endurance driver. The following year he finished second at the same event in an XK120, and in 1955 he won outright with co-driver Pierre Stasse in a Mercedes 300SL. Washer, meanwhile, enlisted him to drive 0373GT in its first competitive outing at the Côte de la Roche hillclimb: he came second overall and second in class.

By then, Gendebien had taken a shine to the car. He became the 250's second owner in 1956, the same year he was signed by Ferrari to drive

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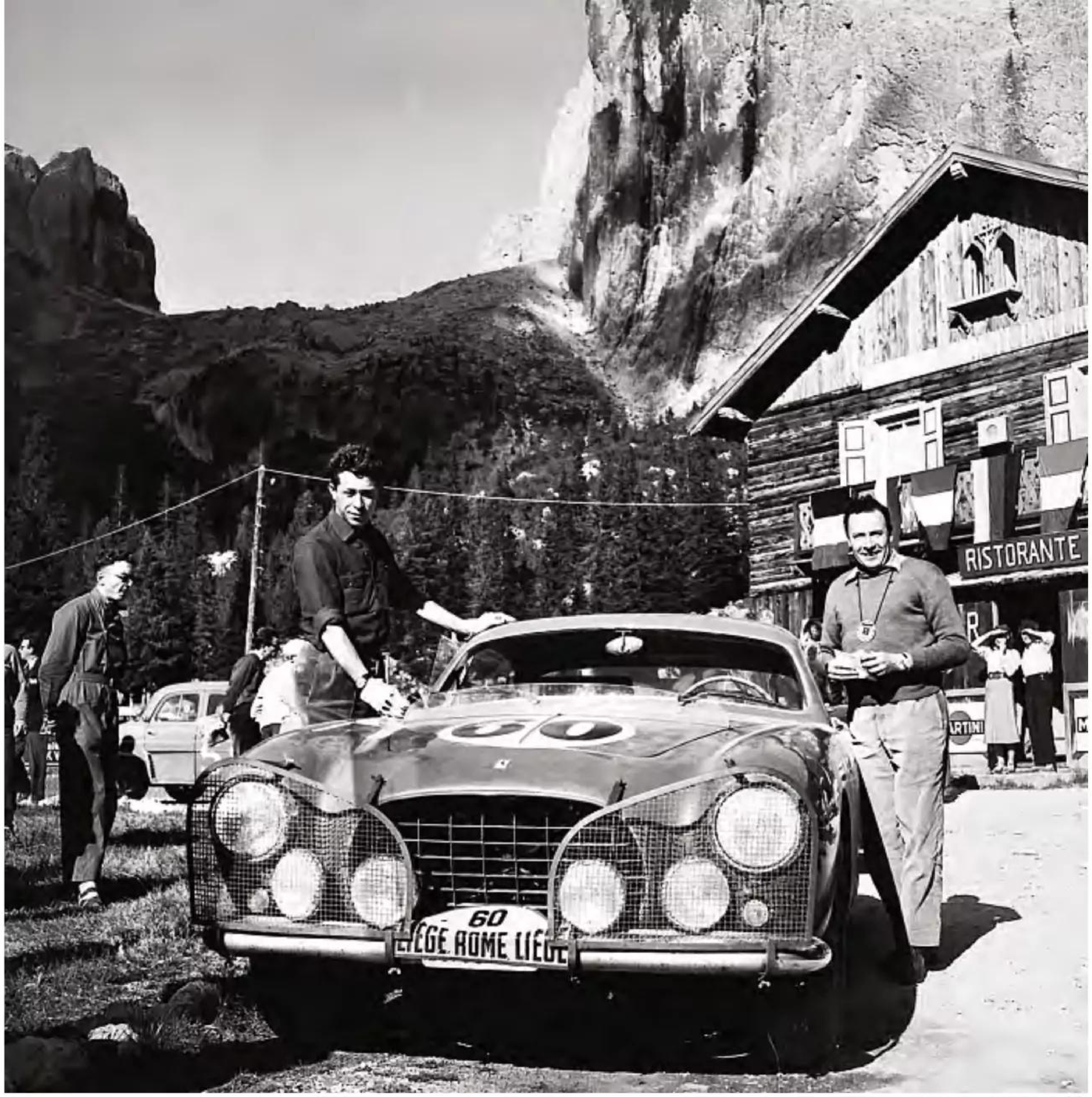
in Formula One and sports cars. It was also clear that Gendebien had found his calling with the Liège-Rome-Liège, which was to form part of the Marathon de la Route series between 1950 and '60. Despite his newly acquired Ferrari coupé being unchanged from its roadgoing specification, Gendebien entered the car in the 1956 event, by then acknowledged as one of the most fearsome road races on the calendar. Once again partnered by Stasse, and with upgrades comprising no more than additional driving lights and a substantial stoneguard (all retained today), the duo achieved a brilliant third place over the 3100-mile course.

Gendebien went on to carve out a fine endurance-racing career – including four wins at Le Mans, three at the 12 Hours of Sebring and three at the Targa Florio – but 0373GT's history becomes patchy for the next 30 years. There is a record of Gendebien competing in the Verbois Hillclimb in 1957, after which he sold the car. It remained in Belgium for some years before being acquired by an American buyer, but by 1990 it had fallen into disrepair. By the time Michigan lawyer and racer Joe Moch acquired the GT, it was missing its engine and gearbox. Moch commissioned the Kleeves Company and then-respected Ferrari restorer Terry Myr (later imprisoned for evading tax on the sale of a rare Lampredi Ferrari engine) to restore the car and prepare it for historic racing. A Ferrari 250GTE 2+2 was sourced as a donor for the engine, gearbox and differential, and the replacement V12 was rebuilt to race spec, with SEFAC-type cylinder heads and six carburettors. With output by then at around 300bhp, a substantial rollcage was also installed and 0373GT was repainted in Rosso Corsa and its cabin retrimmed in black leather.

> *'By 1997, 0373GT was back in Europe. Adding poignancy to this chapter, the car was maintained at Garage Francorchamps'*

The Europa was then entered in various US events, starting with the 1995 Colorado Grand followed by entries in the Meadow Brook Historic Races. By 1997, though, 0373GT was back in Europe for the Tour de France revival, now known as the Tour Auto. Kleeves and Myr continued to develop the car for retrospective events, and in 1999 the 250 tackled both the 1000 Miglia and Liège-Rome-Liège. Adding poignancy to this European chapter, the car was maintained at Garage Francorchamps.

Ambitions for 0373GT appeared to know no bounds. Later the same year the 250 was back in the USA, being prepared for La Carrera Panamericana, on which new owner Brian DeVries finished first in the Original PanAm class. In 2000 DeVries was back again, with 0373GT modified to run disc brakes and larger Halibrand alloys, better suited to Mexico's



From top: Gendebien (on left) and Stasse on the 1956 Liège-Rome-Liège road race; the event was considered one of the most gruelling; Ferrari *en route* to third place

ALEX CALLIER

harsh terrain. (There was some precedent here: American racer Jack McAfee upgraded his Ferrari 340 America the same way for the 1954 race.) Resplendent in dayglo decals, once again DeVries' car took a class victory.

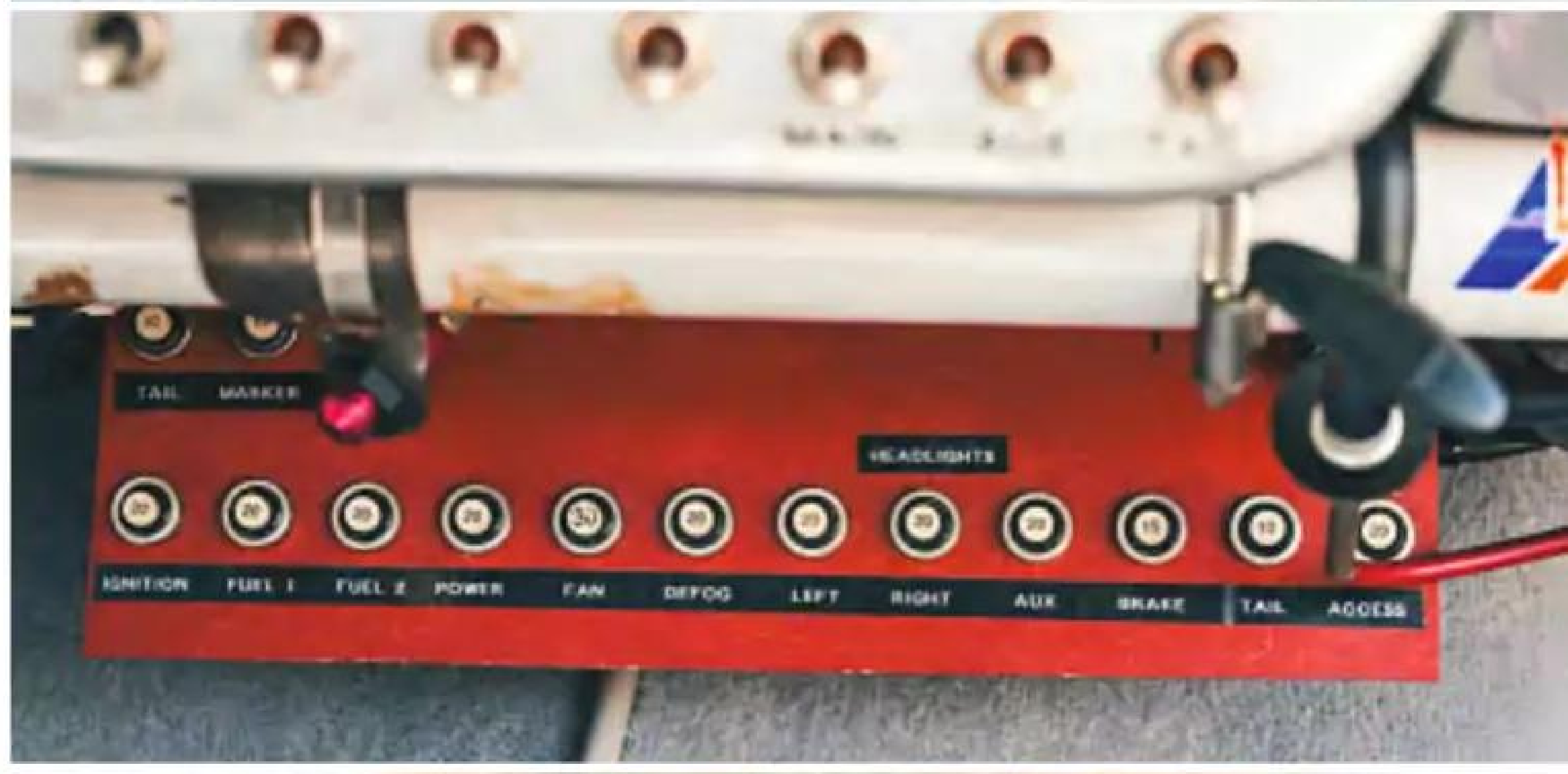
Thankfully, as the 250GT evolved during these later years, its original componentry was retained. So when under new ownership it was returned to Europe, a sympathetic programme was undertaken to return the car to its 1956 Liège-Rome-Liège specification. Newly retrofitted with drum brakes and 16in Borrani spoked rims, the car was campaigned in the Goodwood Revival's Lavant Cup in 2015, then the Mille Miglia and Chateau Impney Hillclimb the following year. But in 2018, when 0373GT changed hands again, a revelatory discovery was made: its original engine was found in an early, US-based 250GT PF Coupé. The car was immediately purchased and shipped back to the UK, where specialist Terry Hoyle undertook a complete rebuild of the V12 before reuniting it with 'our' car. The downside, as current keeper Roy Kent admits, is a reversion from the donor GTE engine's outside-plug design to the original's inside-plug layout (within the cylinders' vee), which is far less accessible.

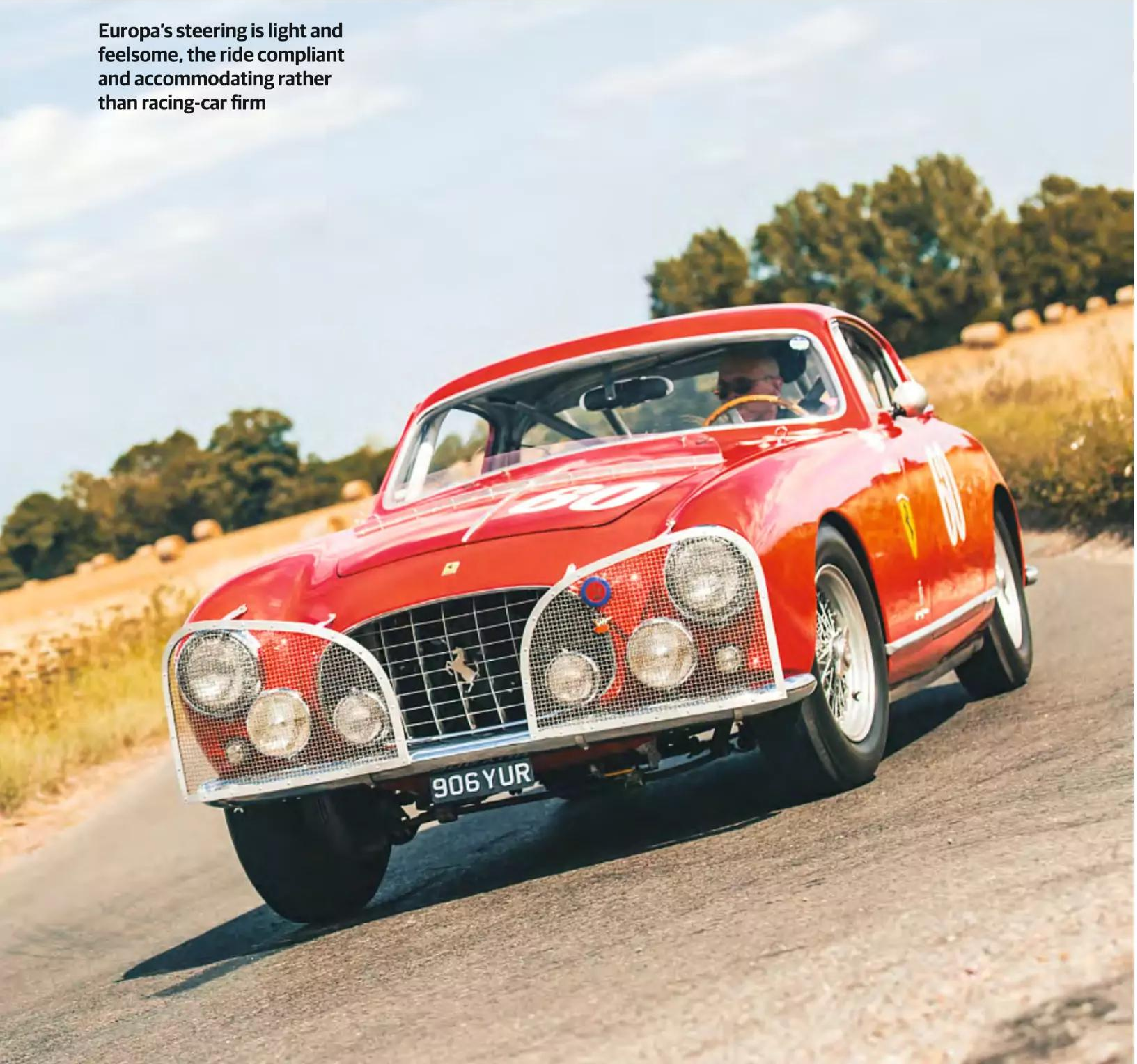
The highways and byways of Norfolk are perhaps a poor substitute for the roads along which Gendebien would have competed in 0373GT, but with a freshly rebuilt motor and instructions not to exceed 4000rpm, they will suffice. Proudly wearing the number 60 with which it competed in the 1956 Liège, the Ferrari's race-ready look has been faithfully recreated, other than its later repaint in *rosso*. The large stoneguards dominate, shielding the car's headlamps and four auxiliary lights mounted in front of the 250's 'milk-crate' grille (0373GT, from the first batch of six out of a total 35 Europa GTs, has a larger grille versus those of the later cars). To minimise bug kills across the shallow windscreen, halfway up the bonnet there's a fly screen – which, like the side and rear windows, is made of Perspex.

In profile, the design is restrained, markedly cab-rearward, with a high beltline and small windows, although overall its influence is clear to see on the competition-orientated 250GT Tour de France that succeeded it.

Wrangle your way into the cabin through the frame of the rollcage and you sit before an untrimmed binnacle with instruments (amusingly, carrying numbers in the same font as those in a Fiat 900T) for speed, revs and oil pressure. Smaller dials for fuel, plus oil and water temperatures, are set into the metal dash next to them, with a bank of toggle switches beneath. Two large Halda timing clocks are mounted to the right, facing the co-driver's seat. To start, you flick on the two fuel pumps and twin coils, and press a button, remembering to add in the electric fan (we're driving in 30°C heat today) when the Ferrari's V12 fires.

I'm having to adopt a slightly reclined driving position due to the fixed seat and steering column, but otherwise it's not too Italianate, and gripping that lovely, wood-rimmed three-spoke wheel easily compensates. There's no great theatre from the engine after start-up, and at low revs it is remarkably tractable now it's once again running on a trio of twin-choke




Europa's steering is light and feelsome, the ride compliant and accommodating rather than racing-car firm

Ecurie
Francorchamps
99
LIEGE ROME LIEGE

99
LIEGE ROME LIEGE

Clockwise: rollcage impedes entry into elegant, functional cabin with gaitered lever; instrument font shared with Fiat; bewildering array of switches; co-driver's clocks

Clockwise: race number honours 0373GT's '56 Liège-Rome-Liège entry; supplying dealer was key Belgian concessionaire; flags of Farina and Ferrari

Weber 36s. The high-mounted, aluminium-balled, gaitered gearlever feels notchy and mechanical, but it is precise and short of throw. Pick up pace and the beginnings of the V12's cultured, mellifluous timbre echo through the lightly insulated cabin. Quick-shifting through the four gears avoids an occasional crunch (it's believed only third and top have synchromesh) and, geared for around 20mph per 1000rpm, we're still okay up to the national speed limit. The steering is wonderfully communicative and relatively light, even down at lower speeds.

Body control for a 70-year-old is composed, but you can feel the live rear axle working over cambered roads. Grip from the 16in Dunlop Racing rubber is strong, but the ride is unsurprisingly pliant considering the original GT remit and the fact it was never intended as a stiffly sprung circuit racer. Setting aside the mediocre performance from the large, finned brake drums – more likely down to set-up today rather than design – this former endurance racer is a usable and enjoyable road car.

But that would be missing the point. For now, a future Liège-Rome-Liège retrospective run isn't in the offing, but this important car, with its colourful road-racing heritage, is just begging to follow in *monsieur* Gendebien's wheel tracks on another epic trans-European tour – and who would bet against a podium finish, just like before?

__Thanks to__ Roy Kent, the Old Racing Car Company (oldracingcar.com), where 0373GT is for sale

Shared technology led to four distinct executive expresses being spun from the same raw materials by Lancia, Saab, Fiat and Alfa Romeo

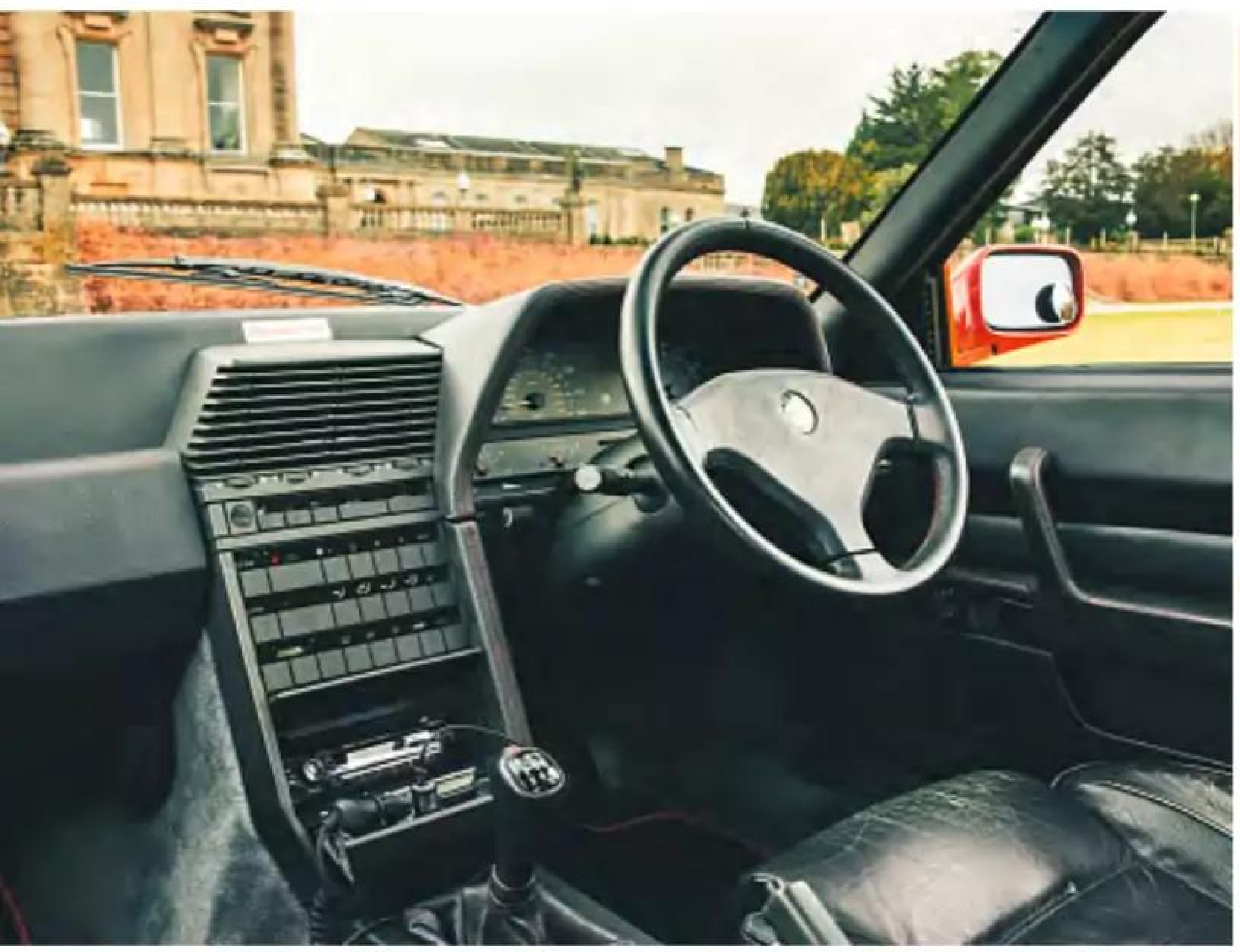
WORDS **AARON McKAY** PHOTOGRAPHY **JACK HARRISON**

E312 NKV
H92 OEE
WYA

Genetic engineering

From top: neat bootlid spoiler; crisp Enrico Fumia lines set 164 apart; two-tone Cloverleaf bodykit adds to the Alfa's visual aggression

Clockwise: period-look 17in alloy wheels; sleek Alfa has group's lowest coefficient of drag, at 0.30; *scudetto* grille



From top: appealing cabin architecture lives up to the Alfa's external promise; bewildering array of buttons gives a distinctly 1980s look

In a wash of whirring photocopiers, soft-ring telephones and incandescent light bars, the 1980s rumbled to the march of a new generation of middle management. And, as their computer-aided sights tightened on egotistical job titles, annual bonuses and stock options, the traditional conservatism of the executive car gave way to a sharper-suited, performance-by-efficiency genre more at pace with this new, high-speed era.

Fortunately, Fiat, Lancia, Alfa Romeo and Saab had planned ahead. As far back as the early 1970s, each had identified the need for a contender in the mid-sized executive-car market that, unlike some previous efforts, would be rationally developed, cost-effective and aimed squarely at volume sales rather than ethereal brand gilding. This was the first thing agreed in the joint project of cars that would become known collectively as the Type Fours.

Co-developed by three then-independent companies, this was much more of a platform-sharing exercise than the Lancia Delta-based Saab 600 had been. It involved packaging different engines and suspension layouts into a family of bodyshells that varied from saloons to hatchbacks – plus a single estate.

Saab claimed a saving of two million hours from the shared development of the Type Four platform, but this was as much of an indication of the Swedish firm's thoroughness as the fact that the resulting 9000 shared only 12, quite minor, body pressings with its closest relation, the Lancia Thema. Saab stylists under Björn Envall refined the hatchback lines, drawn by ItalDesign, for its unveiling in May 1984, four months ahead of the Lancia's Frankfurt debut.

Curiously, the Saab was a shorter car than the prevailing 900 and 160mm off the long-wheelbase 900CD that it was ostensibly built to replace, but because of its airy shape and a transversely mounted engine – a first for Saab – the 9000 was substantially larger inside.

MacPherson struts were another Saab first, although it exercised its autonomy on the rear, opting for its familiar beam axle with trailing arms and a Panhard rod. The turbocharged 175bhp 'four' out of the 900 T16 was the only available option at first, angled 20° backwards and built in-unit with the gearbox, with equal-length outer driveshafts intended to reduce torquesteer. In time, a booted variant, the upmarket £26,495 CDE, followed, along with a naturally aspirated 2-litre model, which broadened the range to the extent that, by 1990,

Clockwise: 'slant-nose' marks later 9000; Erik Carlsson signature; Saab hatch shares almost no panels with the others

From top: Carlsson spec was the Taladega outside the UK; bodykit was part of the package; Saab Scania era predates General Motors

SAAB ELECTRONIC DISPLAY CONTROL
R
INFO

From top: modular radio, heater and ashtray units in L-shaped dash can be switched around; 9000 Aero seats are by Recaro; mixed tech in tripmeter

the 9000's production was exceeding the still-beloved 900, with a steady 45,000 rolling off the lines in Trollhättan each year.

While Saab was battling to reach the big leagues, Lancia, the flagbearer of Italy's luxury-car tradition, was in serious trouble. In 1978, it had sold 12,000 cars in the UK; by 1984, that figure was barely 3000, and global sales weren't enough to compensate for its crumbling British reputation, left in the tatters of rust and poor build quality. The eccentric Gamma, with its flat-four and fastback profile, had not tempted buyers from its increasingly sophisticated European rivals, so the Thema was destined to be less of a successor than a total rethink.

Also turning to ItalDesign, Lancia's neatly proportioned three-box saloon was the visual personification of the firm's cautious approach to a market that it had forgotten how to stir. Echoing the new-school leaders, such as Audi's C3 100 and Renault's 25 that had arrived in 1982, the soberly styled Thema majored on its 0.32 coefficient of drag, stiff bodyshell and a wide range of engines, from naturally aspirated and turbocharged four-pots through a turbodiesel to the outsourced Peugeot-Renault-Volvo V6. In order to appease the *tifosi*, a four-wheel-drive, Ferrari-engined range-topper was promised.

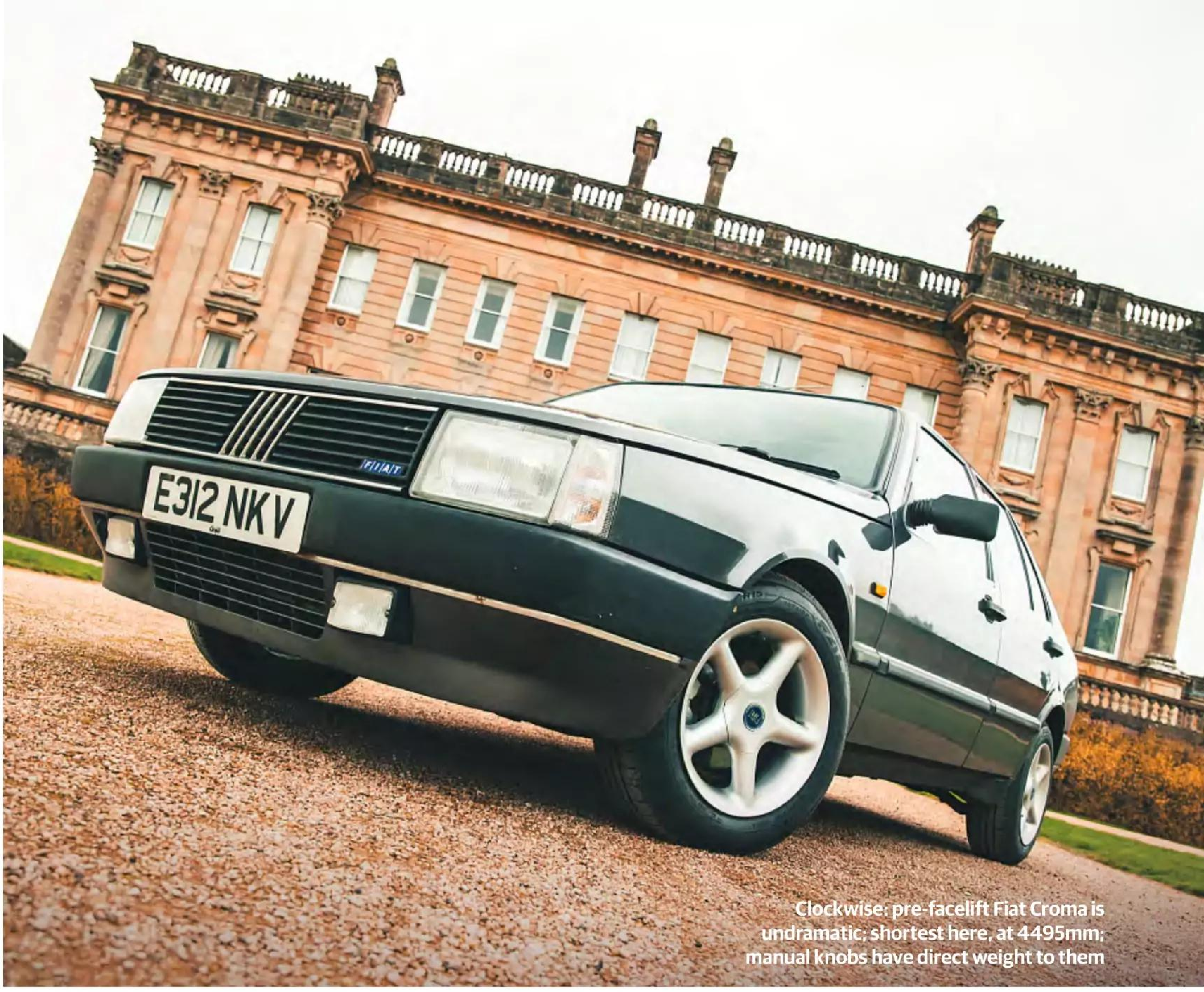
Early press bumf highlighted that 43% of the Thema's body weight was galvanised sheet steel, plus each got 33 litres of rust-inhibiting wax. Treading carefully, UK concessionaire Lancar planned to import 500 cars for 1985; at £15,840 for a fully kitted, 185bhp LX turbo, it was far more competitively priced than Lancias of old.

The arrival of the Fiat Croma in May 1985 suggested a revival of the Turin giant's fortunes in producing large cars, with the memory of the moderately successful 1972-'81 132 feeling much more than a decade old. Though built alongside the Thema at the Mirafiori plant, the Croma was assembled at twice the rate, 400 per day, and its range of engines below the shared 2-litre turbo – tuned for flexibility rather than outright power – was more modest.

Fiat had acquired Lancia in 1969, and it is clear that the two cars were not as desperate to separate their origins as the others. Major body pressings and much more of the floorpan are shared between the Thema and Croma, and their MacPherson-strut front and trailing-arm/transverse-link, coil-sprung rear suspensions are near-identical. The Fiat almost reads like a budget Lancia in specification, especially as the 155bhp £13,500 Turbo ie, but in the metal there is a world of difference between them.

Croma CHT
FIAT
E31

From top: eco-focused CHT Croma was the volume seller; corporate nose helps 0.32Cd figure; rhomboid Fiat logo was introduced in 1968



Clockwise: pre-facelift Fiat Croma is undramatic; shortest here, at 4495mm; manual knobs have direct weight to them

From top: sober Fiat dashboard looks cheap, but is remarkably free from rattles; thick-thread fabric seats are generously sized and the softest here

Fiat added Alfa Romeo to its roster in early 1987, just in time for the launch of the last of the Type Four models, the 164. As the boss of this wider Italian automotive empire, Giovanni Agnelli delayed its launch from the Geneva Salon in April to Frankfurt in September, insisting on more Fiat components in the interior and – unusually for Alfa – time to build stock ahead of anticipated order excitement.

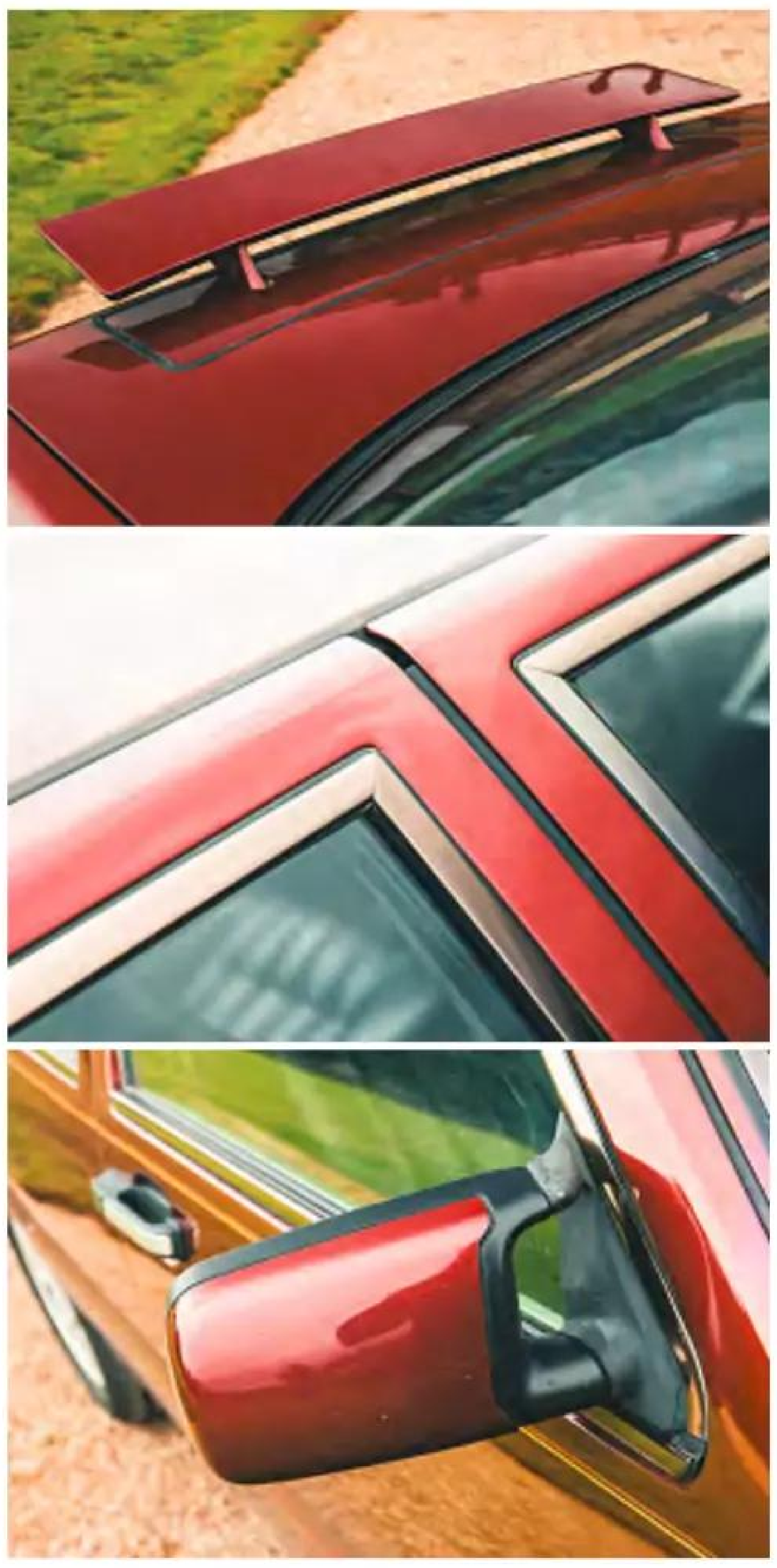
This was a fraught period for Alfa Romeo, which was operating at less than half of its capacity and losing tens of millions of pounds each year. If Fiat and Lancia had been struggling, the darling of Milan was on the precipice of disaster. In the UK, the cars had been painted with the same rusty brush and the appetite for its larger models was minuscule – just 136 Alfa 6s were sold here from 1979-'86, and it didn't bother importing the 1984-'87 90. Meanwhile, the glory of the rest of its ageing range was fading fast. For the UK, sales were down from 14,000 in 1979 to just 220 in 1986.

Fortunately the 164 was a sparkling return to form, not least for its dramatic styling. This time, Pininfarina beat Italdesign to the contract and lead designer Enrico Fumia's signature shoulder line gave the Alfa an identity separate from the others. Its cleverly integrated *scudetto* grille would also join a new generation of cars paid for by Fiat's £2.3bn renewal programme.

Underneath, the MacPherson struts were raked backwards to accommodate the lower bonnet profile, while the expected 2-litre Twin Spark 'four' and 3-litre V6 made up the UK range, with a turbo 'four' and the same VM-sourced turbodiesel seen in the Thema available on the Continent. Like the Saab, the 164 was pitched in the USA from 1991, but in top-spec V6 Lusso form only. Production began on a positive note at the Arese plant, and the 300-car allocation for the UK quickly sold out. Excited plans were mooted for a convertible, coupé and four-wheel-drive range-topper.

By this stage, the Croma was already at the first of its three facelifts, and Fiat UK was announcing £100m plans to expand its dealer network on the back of climbing sales. Though outperformed by its smaller stablemates, the Croma was picking up in a way the Argenta never had, and the value proposition was difficult to argue with. At £1297 less than a Ford Granada, the base-level £9365 Croma CHT was a lot of big car for the money. It explains why there are more of the run-of-the-mill versions left on UK roads than the Turbo ie, though both barely make it into double figures, and why it

Clockwise: Lancia is conservatively styled; Poltrona Frau leather seats; S2 tail-lights on this Series 1 Thema 8.32



From top: retractable wing adds 26lb of downforce at 100mph; wraparound doors and copper-look trim; mirrors direct air away from window

feels appropriate to start here rather than in our relatively intimidating selection of top-spec Saab 9000 2.3 turbo Carlsson, Alfa Romeo 164 3.0 Cloverleaf and Lancia Thema 8.32.

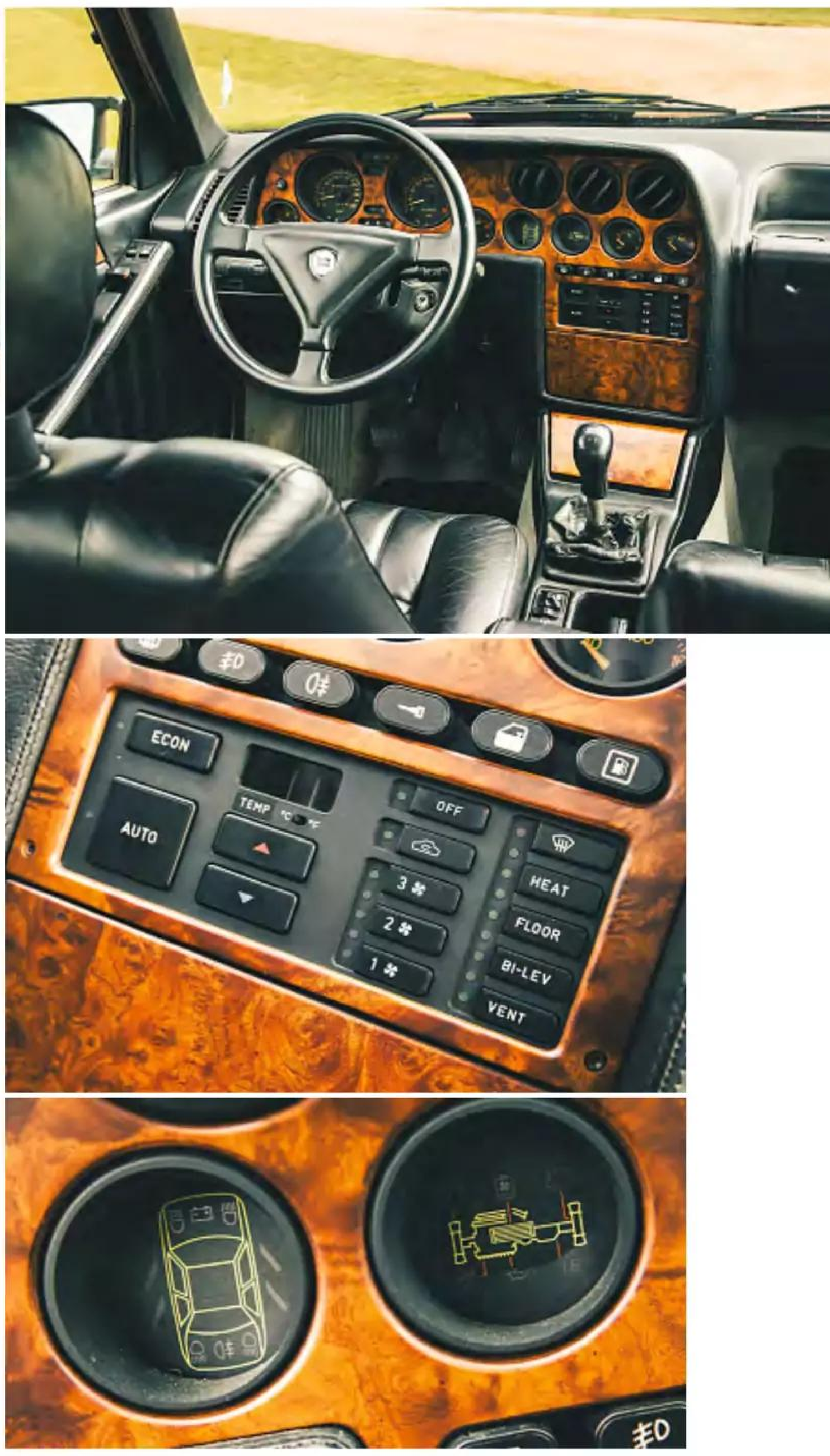
Compared with the others, the Croma's doors feel thin and the cabin sparsely decorated, but there is a completeness to the button-laden dashboard, neatly integrated with the centre console, that confirms its place at the top of the Fiat corporate structure. Blessed with a large glass area, the cabin feels light and spacious, and the generous internal dimensions easily accommodate the wide seats front and rear.

Weighing less than 1100kg, the softly sprung 2-litre CHT has the slightly detached, surreal feeling of a large tin box floating down the road when you set off. Though the mechanical rumblings of the twin-cam are well suppressed, there is a directness to the pedals and a certain notchiness to the rubberised wand of a gearlever that feels a bit uncouth. Yet these transmit the growling intentions of the 90bhp 'four' with wonderful honesty once up to speed, translating the Controlled High Turbulence unit's trick butterfly valves on each inlet tract into extraordinary flexibility under foot.

Thanks to a healthy 128lb ft of torque from 2800rpm, the CHT climbs its economy-minded gearing assuredly, if not urgently, and is happy settling into its lean-burn stride in the overdrive fourth and fifth gears. Steering response from the variable-ratio rack is positive, relaying the motions of its soft springs and the relatively narrow, tall-profile tyres into the inevitable (but commendably delayed) understeer.

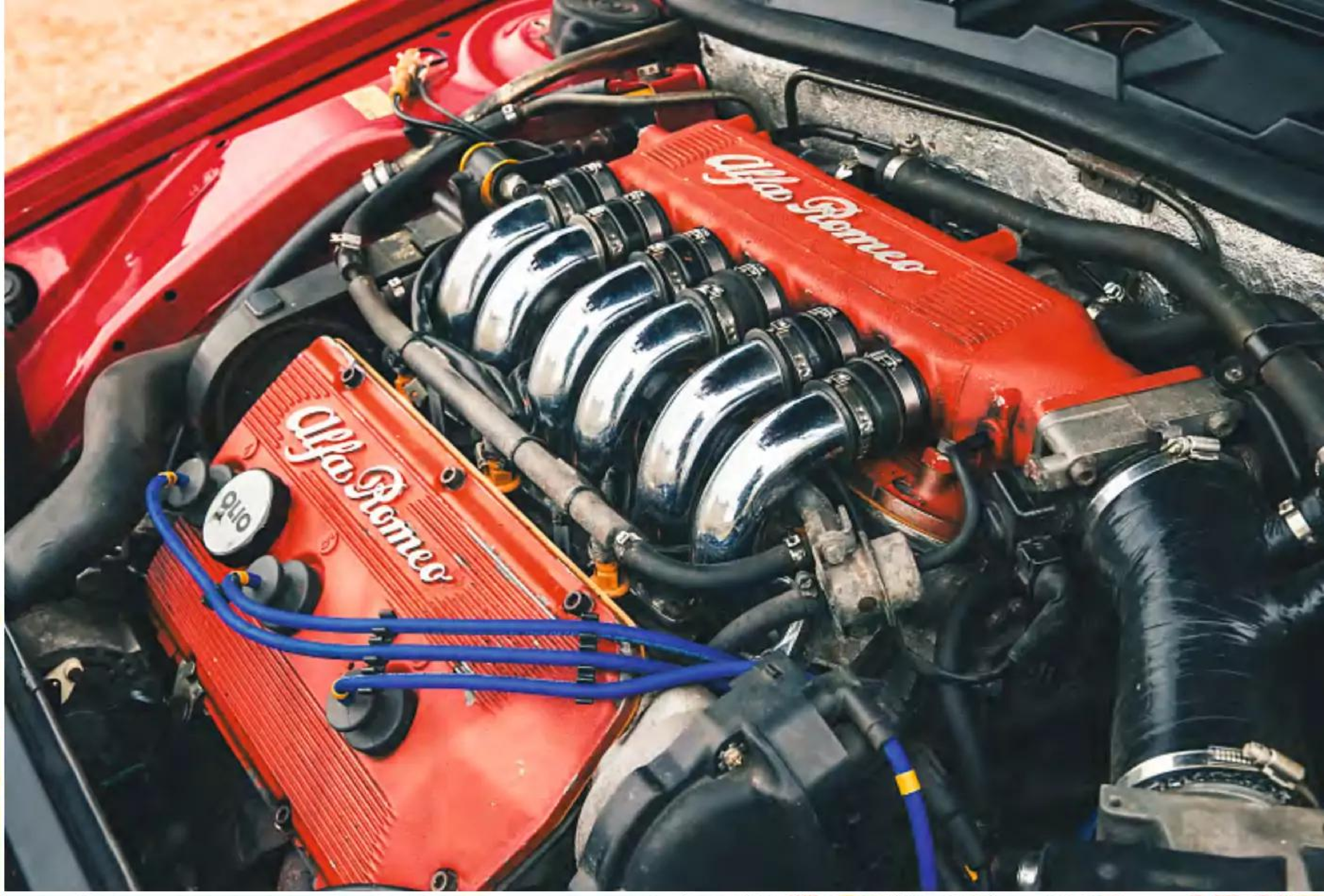
There's a softer tone to the Lancia Thema's door opening, but it's still a way off the weight of a contemporary BMW or Mercedes-Benz, and although there is an instant wow-factor to the lavishly leather-lined and wood-trimmed cabin, there's the faint whiff of hollow plastics underneath, instead of the curiously absent aroma of hide. Look away from the eye-catching recessed dials and there are some ugly inconsistencies in the switchgear, too, although there's no doubting the sophistication of the Saab-Lancia climate control. At first, this all appears problematic for the £37,500 8.32.

Rational comparisons to the £34,850 BMW M5 are as damning as measuring this 212bhp 'powered by Ferrari' flagship within its own range: the new-for-1988, 185bhp Thema Turbo matched the 8.32's 140mph top speed and was marginally quicker to 60mph – for £15k less. Yet this is to wrongly assume the function of Lancia's flagship; intended not as the fastest or

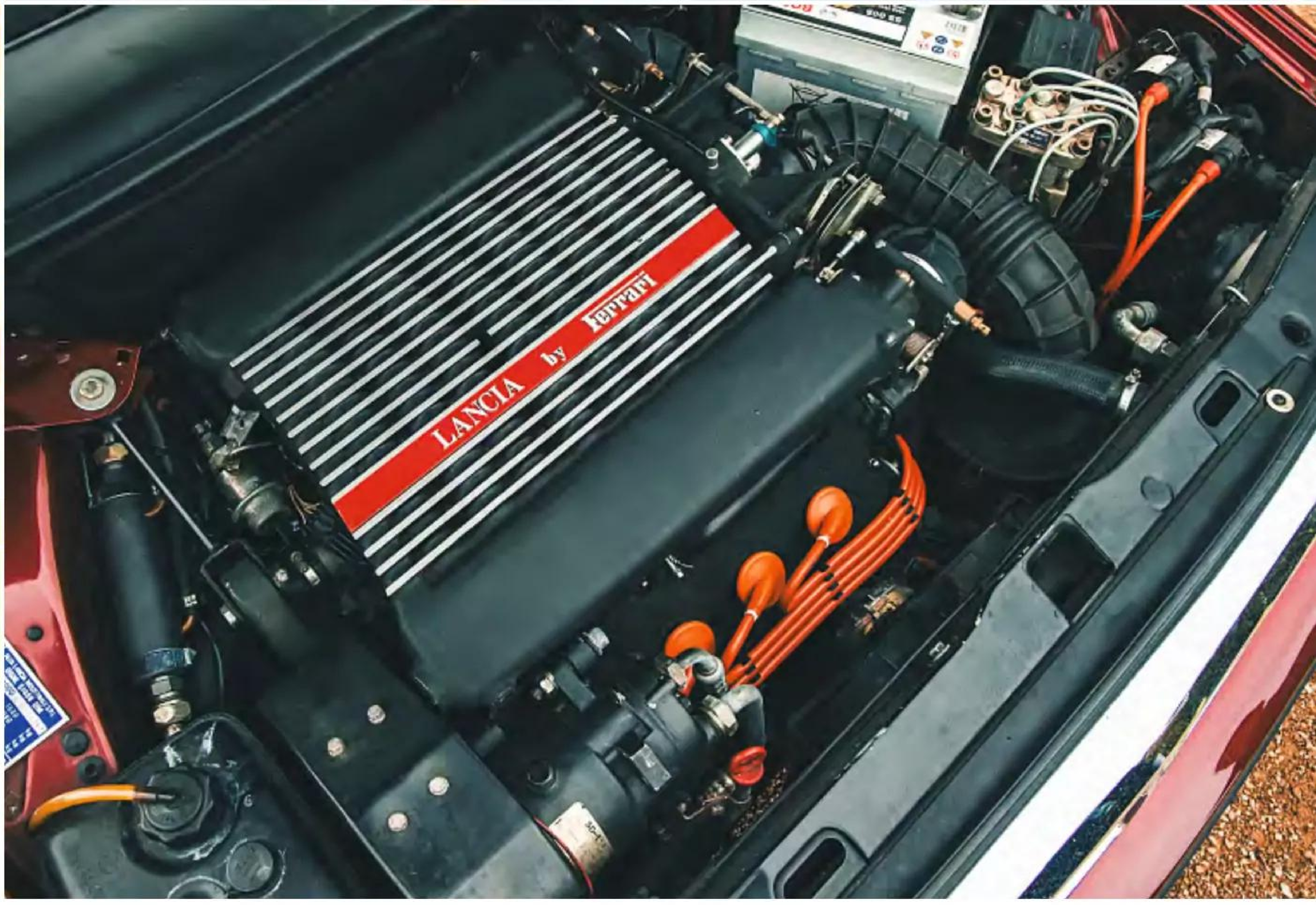


From top: opulent dashboard is trimmed in leather and satin walnut; Saab-Lancia digital climate control; highly stylised warning displays

Alfa has hot-hatch-keen turn-in. Right: Cloverleaf 12-valve V6 uses SZ cams for 200bhp



Composed Lancia resists torquesteer. Right: Ferrari-derived V8 is uniquely tuned



even finest, this was something special from ambitious engineers feeding the dreams of its still fiercely loyal fans. How else would the idea germinate to fit the 32-valve V8 from a Ferrari into the nose of a mid-sized luxury car?

It is extraordinarily snug, sitting on its bespoke subframe slightly ahead of the front axle. The F105L version of Ferrari's 90°, Dino-derived V8 runs a cross- rather than flat-plane crankshaft and is down from 3185cc to 2927cc, with low-down torque its priority. The block was still cast at Maranello, but main assembly was contracted out to Ducati before it reached special 8.32 lines at Lancia's San Paolo plant.

There is a luxurious thrum to the ultimate Thema that immediately dispells any worries of temperament as it oozes forward on a few hundred revs. The clutch is light, the throttle long, while the ZF powered steering is BMW slick and the ride betrays a purpose well above the Croma's, but couldn't be described as firm. Its gearing is actually shorter than the cruising Fiat's, but there is so much shove from low revs – already at 200lb ft by 2500rpm – and the prospect of the full fireworks at the 7000rpm limiter that the ratios seem to last longer.

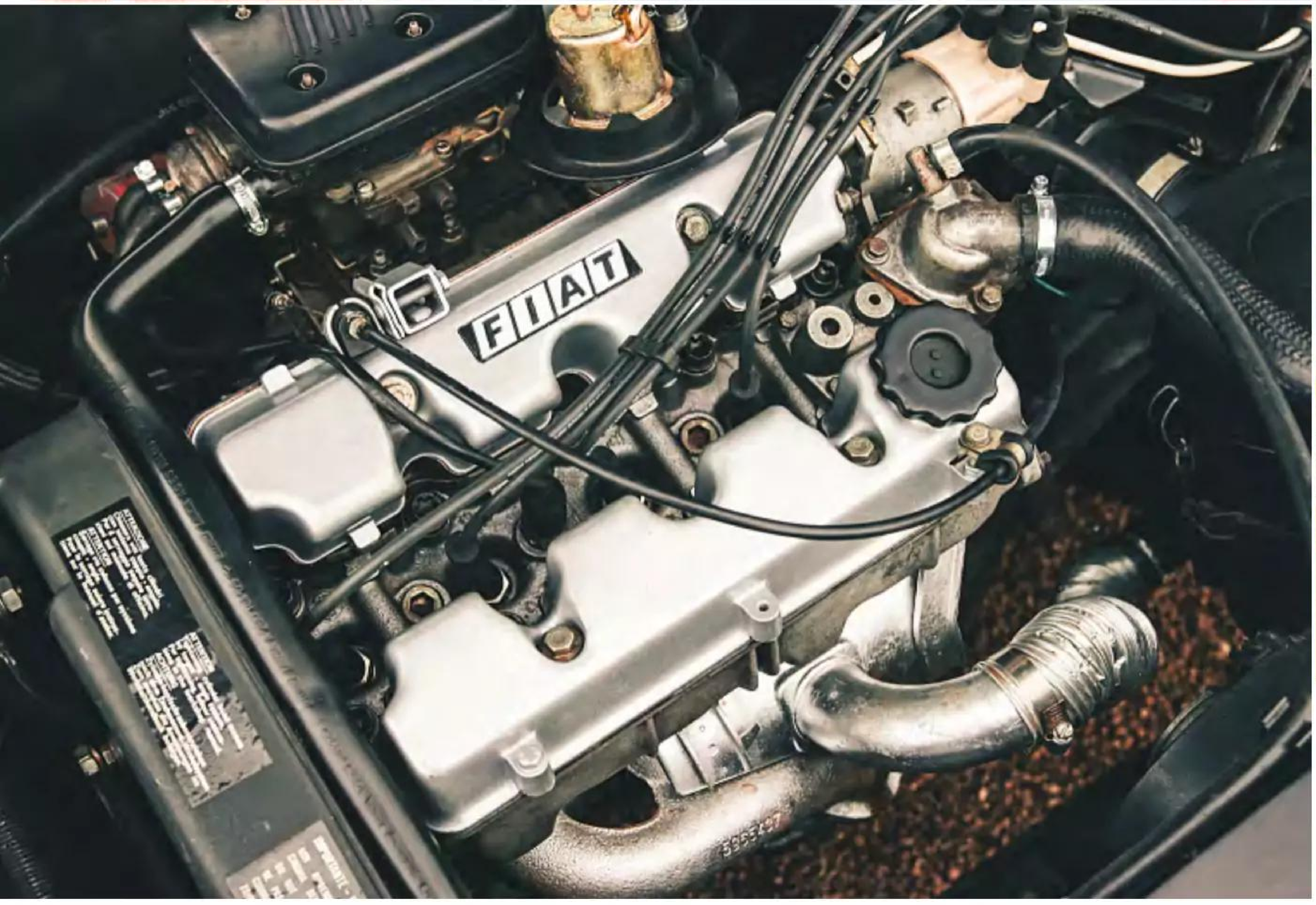
It gains real urgency from 3000rpm, with a subtle squirm from its specially designed 205/55 Goodyears as the V8 spins its cams into a howling roar, slightly muffled from behind the double-skinned bulkhead. Ever smoother, this beautifully balanced engine feels almost short-changed by the tachometer indicating a gearchange, but even third will take you to 100mph. On long, open intermediate roads, the ease with which the 8.32 accelerates and the way its adaptive dampers smother road imperfections encourage a rapid pace. There is little joy in the controls beyond harnessing its jewel of an engine, and the heavy nose is noticable when pushing through tighter corners; there is a sense of composure and accuracy until you ask for everything and it falls away in rolling understeer.

The Saab is slightly quicker but requires more work, managing boost and the largest, most aggressive footprint of the quartet. The 2.3-litre B234 turbo arrived in 1991, bringing power for the top 9000 to 200bhp. 'Our' later Carlsson gains the benefit of direct ignition, a 'slant-nose' front end and other detail improvements accumulated before the more obviously overhauled 9000CS arrived in 1992. For another £1000 on top of the already pricey £27k Turbo SE, the Carlsson pack includes a power bump to 220bhp, a boy-racer bodykit, 6.5x16in Rial three-spoke alloys and, overruling Erik Carlsson's insistence for the earlier cars, shorter-travel, stiffer suspension.

'The Thema gains real urgency as the V8 spins its cams to a howling roar, slightly muffled by the double-skinned bulkhead'

It is certainly the firmest-riding of the set, and the heaviest to steer. This all makes sense when you plant the throttle and a rush of turbocharged energy hurls the Saab forward. Despite the frantic efforts of the traction-control system, a tight grip is needed on the wheel to manage the rampant 205/60 Pirelli P700s as they try to pour 246lb ft of torque into the Tarmac. The brakes – big, ventilated discs matched only by the Thema's – offer prodigious stopping power before surprisingly keen turn-in with noticably less roll than the others, and with firm reaction from the controls it feels easier to pitch the Carlsson into different attitudes mid-corner. But the engine remains slow in response and dramatic with its delivery,

Firm-riding Saab has on-off power delivery. Left: Carlsson-spec 2.3 turbo makes 220bhp



Fiat handles tidily, but is a cruiser at heart. Left: CHT twin-cam restricts inlets below 3000rpm

despite all of Saab's efforts with Automatic Pressure Control, an 8.8:1 compression ratio and the same LH-Motronic computer-controlled injection as the Lancia.

With its upright, L-shaped dashboard, the 9000 has a more enclosed feel than the others, although the bucket seats (from a later 9000CS Aero) aren't as enveloping as they look. Thick door panels, rich carpeting and chunky switchgear give the Saab a sense of quality – even the carry-over 900 heater dials have a pleasing weight – but the acres of black vinyl trim make it feel gloomy and hemmed-in.

The Alfa Romeo, in contrast, is an infectious work of aesthetic harmony, luring you with its crisp lines to an interior that blends intriguing contours with orderly switchgear. The same hi-fi-quality click and multi-line texture of the oddly uniform heater controls is matched to everything else in here, all the way back to the buttons for the rear reading lights.

The extra time invested in this car is obvious. From the turn of the key to the suppression of road noise at speed, the additional insulation makes the 164 feel like a newer generation of car. At 1444kg, it's also the heaviest here. In this early, 12-valve Cloverleaf form, the 3-litre V6 is raised to 200bhp and 195lb ft by SZ-derived cams and a 10:1 compression ratio, while the suspension gets adaptive dampers as standard and a 1in-lower ride height. The owner of this car has fitted a 147GTA limited-slip diff and larger brakes behind period-look 17in rims.

The Giuseppe Busso-designed V6 gives instant response from its light, highly sprung throttle, urging the 164 forward with lusty enthusiasm. Third in the Cloverleaf's shorter-ratio 'box is quickly consumed in a range of baritone reverberations, with a noticeable step up after 4000rpm. The gearchange is sweeter than the others, feeling more accurately bushed, and the whole car feels more solid as it deals with your inputs, although there is something detached about the steering.

Torquesteer blights the 164 beyond the subtle corruptions of its Type Four relations, despite Alfa's attempts to quell it – the Cloverleaf introduced new front suspension geometry and lowered the engine by 30mm – and the aggressive Q2 diff only half solves the problem. Yet turn-in is better even than the determined Saab, and the adaptive damping is a step ahead in controlling its mass. The 164 corners flat, neutral and with the appetite of a hot hatch, while retaining a remarkably fine ride.

Beloved by all who drove it, this was the perfect spearhead for a campaign of new Alfas that followed. At £25,100, the facelifted 24-valve V6 Super of 1993 reached price parity with BMW's formidable 525i SE, and was seen as entirely worthy. The early 1990s hadn't been kind to anyone's bottom line, but the marque's revival over the following decade could stand on solid ground, even if the convertible and coupé never arrived, and the expensive four-wheel-drive Q4 remained a niche offering only for the Continental market. It's a shame the 166 was such a quiet second act in 1996; instead, all eyes were on the smaller 156 that stepped into the exploding compact-executive market.

Just as Alfa was taking its leap of faith, Fiat and Lancia felt the big-car ground fall from beneath them. Suddenly the Croma and Thema looked desperately dated, despite a rash of facelifts. The Thema estate, not sold in the UK, failed to inspire much interest. In Britain, the Croma was discontinued in '93, on the back of falling sales and crushing depreciation. Even with few on the market, year-old Themas were losing 50% of their value in 1994, the year the marque abandoned the UK market for good. While Fiat refocused on small cars, Lancia never recovered, swaying from the strikingly bland Kappa to the superficial quirkiness of the Thesis as flagships of a fading spirit.

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While Alfa fell flat in the North American market, Saab built on its early successes there such that, by the '90s, half its cars crossed the Atlantic. In 1994, annual production of 45,000 9000s eclipsed Lancia's global sales of 32,770. Then Saab, too, was blessed (or cursed) with the funding of a giant, General Motors, for a great expansion of its model range that led to a brief golden era. When the 9000 bowed out in 1998, loyalists mourned the last 'true Saab' as a relic of the firm's lost independence.

Times were changing. Shared engineering was just the start of a new era of pressure on balance sheets, where conglomerates swallowed up greater parts of industries and everything was tracked by the computers that gave offices a new, glowing ambience. The cars advanced just as quickly, growing in ability and sophistication, leaving behind the spirits of marques increasingly mired in marketing. As the Type Fours have turned from visions of the future to bridges to the past, we can be thankful that they aren't all one and the same.

***Thanks to** Heythrop Park, Reserve by Warner Hotels (warnerhotels.co.uk); Saab Owners' Club of GB (saabclub.co.uk); Alfa Romeo Owners' Club UK (aroc-uk.com); Anglia Car Auctions (angliacarauctions.co.uk); McGrath Maserati (mcgrathmaserati.co.uk)*

ALFA ROMEO 164 CLOVERLEAF

Sold/number built 1987-'98/273,857 (all)
Construction steel monocoque
Engine all-alloy, sohc-per-bank 2959cc V6, Motronic fuel injection
Max power 200bhp @ 5800rpm
Max torque 198lb ft @ 4400rpm
Transmission five-speed manual, FWD
Suspension independent, at **front** by MacPherson struts **rear** struts, transverse and trailing links; anti-roll bar f/r
Steering power-assisted rack and pinion
Brakes vented front, solid rear discs, with servo and anti-lock
Length 14ft 11⅓in (4555mm)
Width 5ft 9⅓in (1760mm)
Height 4ft 7in (1400mm)
Wheelbase 8ft 8¾in (2660mm)
Weight 3183lb (1444kg)
0-60mph 7.8 secs
Top speed 143mph **Mpg** 21.4
Price new £25,965 (1991)
Price now £10-15,000

SAAB 9000 CARLSSON

Sold/number built 1984-'98/503,087 (all)
Construction steel monocoque
Engine iron-block, alloy-head, dohc 2290cc 'four', Mitsubishi TD04 turbocharger, Bosch LH-Motronic fuel injection
Max power 220bhp @ 6500rpm
Max torque 246lb ft @ 2000rpm
Transmission five-speed manual, FWD
Suspension: front independent, by MacPherson struts **rear** beam axle, trailing links, Panhard rod, coil springs, telescopic dampers; anti-roll bar f/r
Steering power-assisted rack and pinion
Brakes vented discs, servo and anti-lock
Length 15ft 8¼in (4780mm)
Width 5ft 9½in (1764mm)
Height 4ft 8in (1420mm)
Wheelbase 8ft 9¼in (2672mm)
Weight 3053lb (1385kg)
0-60mph 7.4 secs
Top speed 145mph **Mpg** 20.7
Price new £28,595 (1991)
Price now £5-10,000

LANCIA THEMA 8.32

Sold/number built 1984-'94/c336,000 (all)
Construction steel monocoque
Engine all-alloy, dohc-per-bank 2927cc V8, Bosch KE3-Jetronic fuel injection
Max power 212bhp @ 6750rpm
Max torque 210lb ft @ 4500rpm
Transmission five-speed manual, FWD
Suspension independent, at **front** by MacPherson struts **rear** struts, transverse and trailing links; anti-roll bar f/r
Steering power-assisted rack and pinion
Brakes vented front, solid rear discs, with servo and anti-lock
Length 15ft ¾in (4590mm)
Width 5ft 8¼in (1733mm)
Height 4ft 8½in (1433mm)
Wheelbase 8ft 8¾in (2660mm)
Weight 3137lb (1423kg)
0-60mph 7.2 secs
Top speed 139mph **Mpg** 15.6
Price new £37,500 (1988)
Price now £20-35,000

FIAT CROMA CHT

Sold/number built 1985-'96/c438,000 (all)
Construction steel monocoque
Engine iron-block, alloy-head, dohc 1995cc 'four', single Weber 34DAT 54/350 carb
Max power 90bhp @ 5500rpm
Max torque 124lb ft @ 2800rpm
Transmission five-speed manual, FWD
Suspension independent, at **front** by MacPherson struts **rear** struts, transverse and trailing links; anti-roll bar f/r
Steering power-assisted rack and pinion
Brakes discs, with servo
Length 14ft 9in (4495mm)
Width 5ft 9⅓in (1760mm)
Height 4ft 8½in (1433mm)
Wheelbase 8ft 8¾in (2660mm)
Weight 2390lb (1084kg)
0-60mph 12.1 secs
Top speed 113mph **Mpg** 31.1
Price new £9364.93 (1987)
Price now £3-6000

Evolution of Type Fours, from right, as square Fiat Croma blends into the reworked Alfa 164

WHAT GOES AROUND…

…comes around. Mazda popularised rotary power with cars such as the R100 Coupé. This tastefully uprated example brings the technology full circle

WORDS **MARTIN BUCKLEY** PHOTOGRAPHY **JACK HARRISON**

There is much to be said for starting from scratch in the car-making game. You can approach matters with fresh eyes, avoiding past mistakes and the manacles of tradition, and all while assessing the commercial landscape with a dispassionate rationalism. Thus it was with the Japanese motor industry as it blossomed in the late 1960s and early '70s. It was not merely a case of newcomers learning not to run before they could walk. The Japanese, with no real tradition of automobile manufacture, enjoyed the luxury of being able to sit back and see what worked – and what didn't – from both product and industrial points of view.

Simple, dependable and well-made cars appeared to be the message, built to serve the end user rather than satisfy engineers' egos. Characterless, tinny and gruesomely styled in some instances, for sure, but customers would prove more than willing to overlook these shortcomings if the price was right and the product was dependable. It was the birth of the car as a consumer durable – 'white goods' – and when individualism was engineered out in favour of a merciless banality.

The formula worked. Build them simple and build them bland, but build them well. Most of all, build lots and lots and lots of them, so when supplies from rival firms dry up (probably due to strikes), you can step in with immediate delivery in a full choice of colours.

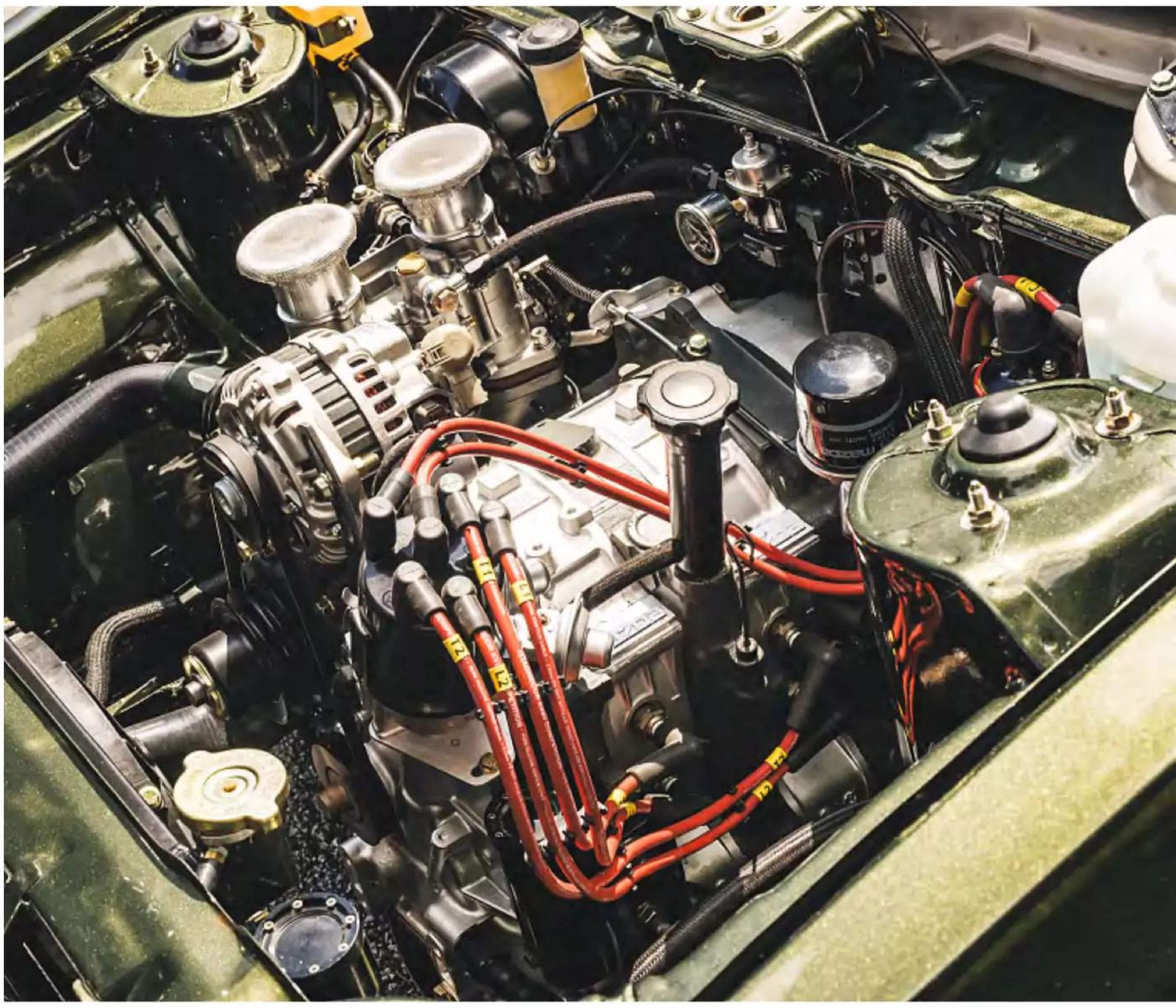
From its first, faltering steps barely a decade earlier, Japan was becoming a threat on all fronts, shaping up to dominate a landscape that, largely through its own arrogance and complacency, was ready for the taking. As with its cameras, motorcycles and transistor radios, its once clumsy and unappealing automobiles were becoming distressingly acceptable by the turn of the decade, even desirable in some terms. What they might still have lacked in

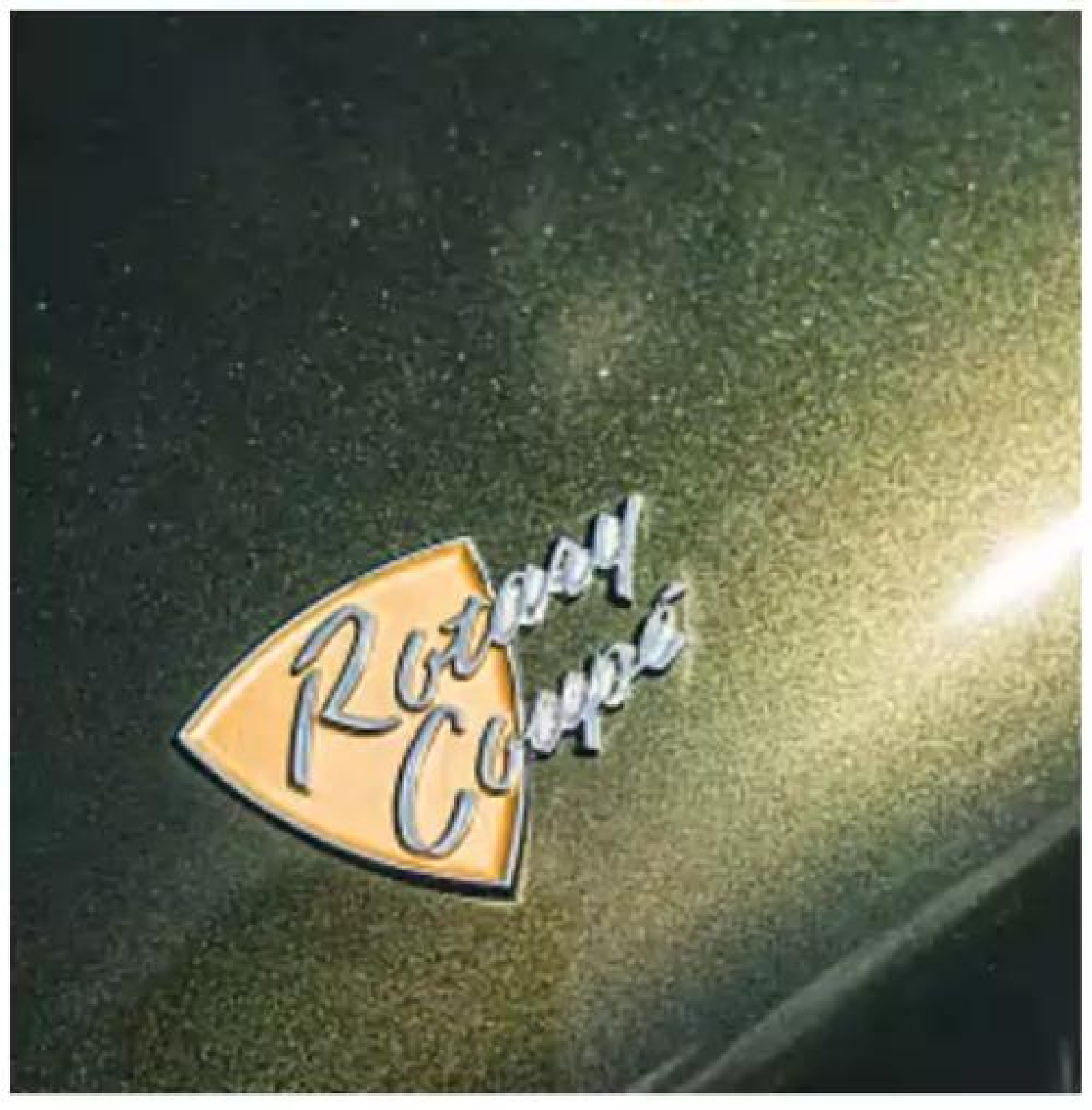
FVG 673J

certain areas of styling and technical finesse, they more than made up for in terms of finish, high standards of equipment and value for money. The world was ready for them, which was just as well because most of the two million cars its industry built (increasing by 30% annually) were for export rather than for the domestic market, where there were still barely the roads fit to drive automobiles on.

Where the likes of Nissan and Toyota shied away from high-tech solutions, Toyo Kogyo, the company that marketed Mazda cars, did things slightly differently. It was far from the biggest operator, but, having thrown in its lot with the rotary engine, punched above its weight with its large waterfront factories in Hiroshima. Toyo Kogyo bought the rights to build the Wankel engine from NSU in 1961 and was soon outflanking the Germans. Its engineers made a working prototype before the first units had even arrived from Neckarsulm. Its production motors were, arguably, more dependable, less thirsty and more powerful than the originals.

If Datsun and Toyota could capture the minds and wallets of customers incentivised purely by value for money, Mazda hoped to command the attention and respect of the connoisseurs and taste-makers of automotive culture. If it hedged its bets by continuing to produce, concurrently, utterly unremarkable piston-engined cars (such as the Mazda 1000





Above: rotor's Reuleaux triangle outline appears in grille badge and tail logo. Left: this car has a highly modified 12A engine making 200bhp

FVG 673J
MAZDA

> *"It's not a fully-fledged restomod, more an 'OEM-plus' restoration that respects the original while incorporating subtle enhancements"*

Compact and neatly proportioned R100 has room for four in a cosy cabin. It was also offered as a four-door saloon in the Japanese market

and the pretty, Bertone-styled 1500/1800 saloon), it unmistakably set the tone of its ambition straight out of the gate with the futuristic 110S Cosmo, a rotary-engined sports-car flagship that drove as well as it looked but, being largely handbuilt, was not cheap.

What was required was a means of spreading the Wankel fairy dust in the form of a more affordable, more exportable car based on the established, piston-engined platforms.

Enter the 1968-'73 R100. Unremarkable in all things other than its engine, it was based on Mazda's second-generation Familia, the car that, from 1963 in first-generation form, had brought the company out of the *kei*-car class (with the R360 and Carol) into the small family saloon market. The car we know as the R100 Coupé was shown as a prototype alongside the Cosmo at the 1967 Tokyo motor show, based on the new Familia 1200 Coupé and badged RX-85. It was introduced in its home market as the Familia Rotary Coupé in July 1968 (but badged R100 – less of a mouthful – for export) and differentiated itself from the piston-engined models by way of a more prominent bonnet, grille and bumper shape, along with circular rear lights and appropriate badging.

The R100 was an interim product between the exotic Cosmo and the mass-produced RX-2/RX-3/RX-4, 725,000 examples of which were built between 1970 and '78. These cars paved the way for the success of the RX-7. The R100 was also produced for its home market in four-door form as the SS Rotary Sedan. In both cases it ran bigger, 14in wheels, disc front brakes and a larger, 13-gallon fuel tank to accommodate an 18-23mpg thirst. In Japan, this greediness was somewhat offset by the cheaper, under-1-litre road-tax bracket applied to the R100.

Its 0820 Type 10A, twin-rotor, 100bhp engine – 491cc per rotor – was less highly tuned than the Cosmo's but could be built at the rate of 4000 a month, at a time when NSU was only making 750 Ro80 engines a month. It featured cast-iron rather than alloy side plates, cast-iron rotors, side inlet porting and two spark plugs per cylinder. Its twin distributors helped slightly staggered ignition timing, and carbon apex-seals were used for their longevity and self-lubricating qualities. Within a few years, Mazda would prove the compact, smooth and powerful rotary unit was a feasible everyday technology. The R100's case was helped by notable success in endurance events: in 1969, R100s won the Grand Prix of Singapore and Suzuka All-Japan Grand Cup, scored fifth and sixth at the Spa 24 Hours, and took fifth in the Marathon de la Route at the Nürburgring.

The architecture of the car, a dinky fastback of unmistakably Japanese origin, was identical to that of its piston-engined sibling: a steel monocoque-bodied, close-coupled four-seater with front MacPherson struts and a leaf-sprung live rear axle. Standard equipment included a toolkit, a neat plug-in inspection light and a 6800rpm warning buzzer that, in unison with a device that shut down the Hitachi carburettor's second choke, protected the engine from over-revving. In original, four-speed form the R100, usefully lighter than the Cosmo, would do

From top: five-speed 'box here, but original lever is retained; seats unique to rotary R100s

MAZDA R100

(specifications for standard car)

Sold/number built 1968-'73/95,800
Construction steel monocoque
Engine alloy/iron 982cc twin-rotor Wankel, Hitachi twin-choke carburettor
Max power 100bhp @ 7000rpm
Max torque 98lb ft @ 3500rpm
Transmission four-speed manual, RWD
Suspension: front independent, by MacPherson struts, anti-roll bar **rear** live axle, leaf springs, telescopic dampers
Steering recirculating ball
Brakes discs front, drums rear, servo
Length 12ft 7¾in (3854mm)
Width 4ft 10¼in (1480mm)
Height 4ft 5in (1346mm)
Wheelbase 7ft 5½in (2273mm)
Weight 1770lb (803kg)
0-60mph 10.9 secs
Top speed 108mph **Mpg** 18-21
Price new £1650 **Price now** £50,000

60mph in second, 80 in third and anything between 108 and 112mph flat-out, depending on who you believed. At a relaxed 100mph cruise, it was pulling 5250rpm (it was fairly high-geared), but only doing about 14mpg.

FVG 673J was shown at Race Retro in 2025, having emerged from an exhaustive rebuild at Silver Fern Performance (*The specialist*, December 2025). Its restoration is the product of devoted collaboration between owner Ryan Theodore and Dwayne Aislabie of Silver Fern. Most of the decision-making took place over WhatsApp, with Ryan living between his home in Sydney, Australia, and work projects in Qatar.

The beautiful, dark-green paint is a Lexus colour, courtesy of Colin Williams of Bayside Services, who invested 400 hours into the fully rustproofed and seam-sealed bodyshell, in which the owner was keen to engineer-out as many rattles as possible.

"It is not a fully-fledged restomod that overwhelms the original chassis," says Ryan, an enthusiastic collector of rotary Mazdas, "more of an 'OEM-plus' restoration that respects the original concept while incorporating subtle enhancements. It's a pure road car that will not see a track day, never mind a race. The original character of the car has not been compromised; it's what Mazda might have produced if it had continued making the R100."

Beautifully presented in the surgically clean engine bay, the compact rotary unit is now a bridge-ported 12A with Series 1/2 RX-7 housings, modified exhaust ports and enlarged inlet tracts, and with the front plate modified to allow for side-mounting of the engine, as the 10A was originally installed in the R100. The rotors, lightened and balanced, are of RX-7 S2/3 origin; likewise the ignition system, five-speed gearbox, rear axle and rear discs. The front discs are standard R100, but the boot-mounted servo is a modern, electronic job. The high-output oil pump, stainless-steel exhaust (with twin silencers and 3in 'dump' pipe) and large-capacity radiator are custom items, as are the limited-slip diff and high-output coils. There's an oil cooler and a modern alternator, and the battery has been moved to the boot.

I had forgotten how small these early Mazdas were: at 4ft 10in wide, this pretty little car is also narrow for its length and looks almost freakishly tiny among obese moderns. It sits a little lower than the original, but does not look slammed – the sad fate of too many '70s classics these days. The wheels are standard R100 steels, and if I told you how much the hubcaps are worth you wouldn't believe me.

Shoulder room inside is at a premium for two slightly above-averagely built males. With the seats right back, there is no legroom in the rear and not much headroom. The thinly padded seats recline, have built-in headrests and, like the dash, were unique to the rotary-engined versions of these Mazdas in export markets; in Japan, some top-spec, piston-engined Familia models had the same dashboard. With its central stack of instruments, it evokes the look of the Cosmo fascia, with a hint of Alfa or Lotus, complete with (real) wood-rimmed steering wheel, a map light, and separate ammeter and oil-pressure gauges. Dwayne managed to retain the original four-speed gearlever, which exits at a pleasing angle from the base of the console.

With double the amount of power it had when it was born, you can take it as read that this R100 goes down the road in a pretty nifty fashion, without being a crazy hot rod. It certainly goes about its business far more assertively than its apologetic looks suggest.

The pulsing, two-stroke throb at tickover softens into a turbine hum as the revs rise. Pull away, and the clutch is light and smooth, while steering that initially seems vague around the straight-ahead improves as the speeds rise. Dwayne has engineered-out the original soft damping and tendency for the rear axle to hop sideways, and made the handling flat and neutral up to high cornering forces. The R100's slender build adds to its nimble feel, and the brakes are magnificent in both power and balance. Like most Japanese gearboxes, this one has a sweet, light and precise action. With that extra ratio, the main limit on top speed must be the ability to keep the front wheels on the deck.

Hold it in second or third and the power just keeps coming, getting smoother. I instinctively change up early, but there always seems to be power to spare. There is also plenty of low-speed urge, with no feeling of snatch.

Rare though it is today, the R100 was not especially uncommon in its period: total production through to 1973 was 95,800 units. It spearheaded Mazda's assault on the North American market (US models had circular headlamps) in 1971-'72, and about 1500-2000 went to Australia, where its performance and $2790 price-tag put it in the same class as a variety of big Fords and Holdens. Its impact in the UK was minimal, though: certainly, very few made it here. There were still only 30 Mazda dealers in 1970, and at £1649 the R100 was too much of an oddity to gain much traction against the likes of Ford's cheaper, faster 3-litre Capri, the nifty Opel Rekord Sprint and a variety of Alfa, Lancia and Fiat coupés.

Any pre-RX-7 rotary Mazda is a rare sight today, but with only three or four known to be in the UK (out of an unknown total imported), the R100 has a semi-mythical status second only to the original Cosmo.

Thanks to *Silver Fern Performance (01244 820205)*

Clockwise from left: bonnet, grille and bumper differ from the piston-engined model; Lexus metallic hue; hubcaps are a rare commodity; real wood-rimmed steering wheel

'With that extra ratio, the main limit on top speed must now be the ability to keep the front wheels on the deck'

From far left: busy centre stack in the compact cabin; circular tail-lights are another nod to rotary power; discreet vents in the neat C-pillar

1965
91
1965
RALLYE MONTE-CARLO
8 EMO
S
MORRIS
COOPER

SMALL SOLDIER

This early Mini Cooper 'S' was built to contest the RAC Rally in '63, and BMC's sporting and cultural icon has lost none of its charm or verve

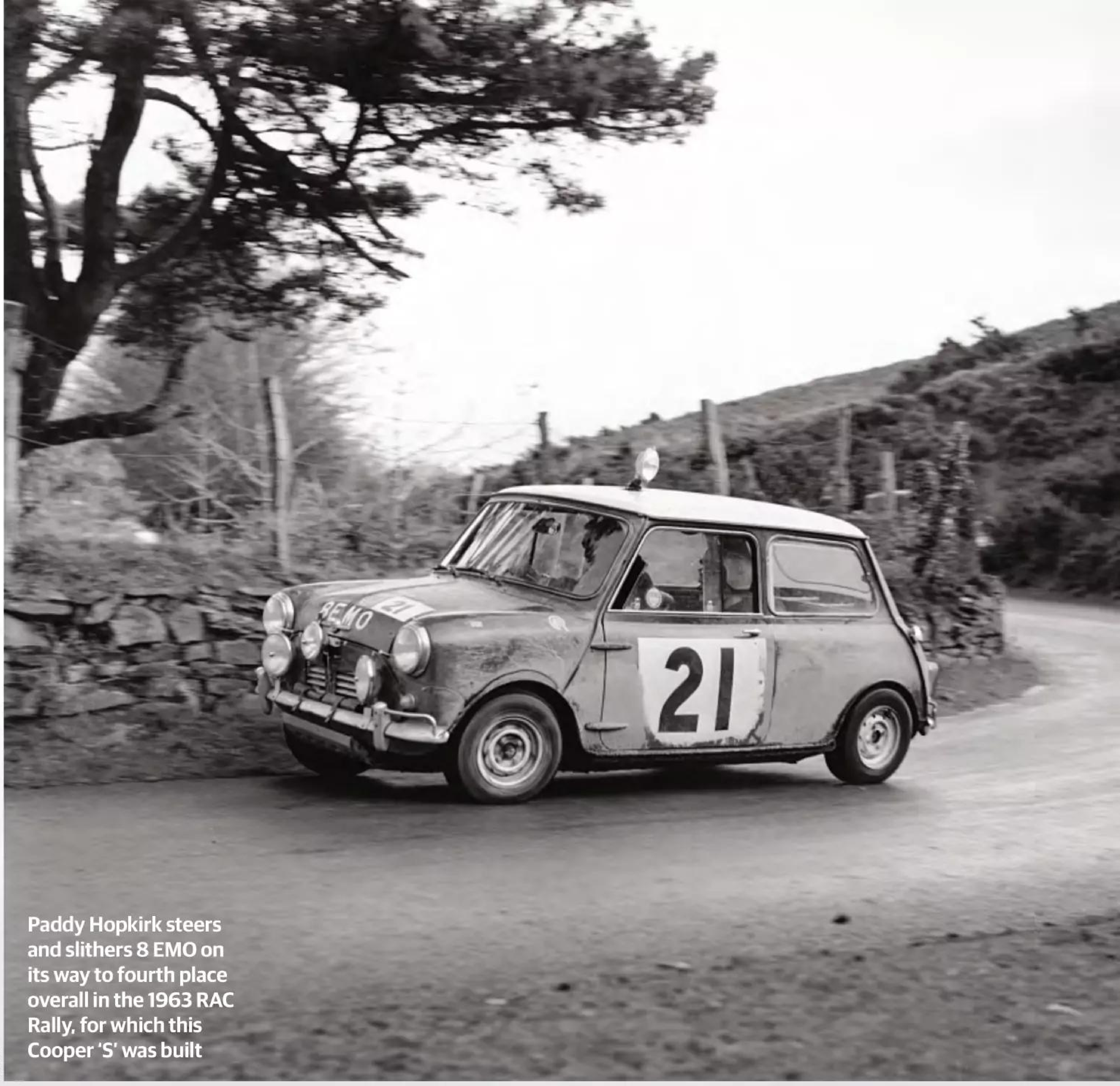
WORDS **SIMON CHARLESWORTH** PHOTOGRAPHY **MAX EDLESTON**

The bolted-in rollcage shivers as you drive. It is the same cage that, along with the vinyl bucket seat's determined side bolsters, made entering this Morris Mini Cooper 'S' feel like squeezing between a rock and a hard place. It's just one element of this old rally car's frenetic and enjoyably uncouth driving experience.

Friendly waves, wide smiles and flashing headlights are another. As is the scale disparity between what was deemed sufficient in 1959 to transport a family and today's interpretation of the same requirement. Its famous red-and-white British Motor Corporation Competitions Department colours not only help make this Lilliputian tearaway stand out from all those grey giants, but also give you a better chance of being seen and not squashed. Hopefully.

Inside chassis K/A2S4/384848 – this is a very early Cooper 'S' built for the 1963 RAC Rally – and immersed in the A-series' gruff vocals and gear whine is a black, crackle-finished Comps dashboard peppered with Smiths instruments and toggle switches. The latter are marked with Dymo-tape labels, one of which displays the 6500rpm rev limit next to the 10,000rpm tacho. There are still the cracked and faded remains of the Mini's road trim, but they have been largely replaced by the necessities of rallying.

The clutch is more or less immediate, engaging after the first inch of travel. As for the servo-assisted brakes, these are only used when encountering junctions, traffic jams or plonkers, because roads seldom tax this car's cornering ability. Soon, though, comes a reminder of my lack of Mini fitness. It has been a few years since I drove one, and already there are the first sharp twinges of 'Issigonis



GETTY

Paddy Hopkirk steers and slithers 8 EMO on its way to fourth place overall in the 1963 RAC Rally, for which this Cooper 'S' was built

'8 EMO is believed to be the only works Mini Cooper "S" to have been fitted with all three "S"-spec engines by Comps'

shin' – a cramp-like condition caused by having to apply slight throttle in dawdling traffic. It comes from Sir Alec's love of masochistic driving positions, which he erroneously thought ensured driver alertness.

This is made worse in the Cooper 'S' by the hyperactive throttle response from its pair of chunky SU H4 carburettors. Catch a big pothole, your right foot wobbles and the Mini makes a lead-straining start for the horizon, as per an untrained puppy. Although, in fairness, this Hydrolastic car rides far better than the earlier dry suspension's 'boing 'n' bounce' experience, yet it has none of the road-spec Hydrolastic system's wallowy float and dive foibles, courtesy of its additional dampers. This competition set-up really does provide a good ride and sharp handling.

K/A2S4/384848, registered 8 EMO, was first powered by the short-lived 1071cc engine when it was built for the 1963 RAC Rally. The Mini Cooper had been conceived by John Cooper, who fitted one of his Formula Junior-spec 997cc A-series engines into a Mini in 1961, overcoming much recalcitrance from Issigonis (who was both the Mini's chief designer and head of Morris Engines). The problem was that by '61 the long-stroke 997cc unit was nearing the end of its developmental tether. To keep both Cooper's Formula Juniors and competition Minis in with a chance of silverware, he wanted to move up into the 1100cc class.

Alas, attempts to increase the capacity of the 997cc unit had been unsuccessful. Its long, 81.28mm stroke was not happy maintaining high revs, and boring out the liners to 64.58mm left too little metal between the cylinders. So Morris Engines had to come up with a different breed of A-series. The short-stroke (68.2mm) design was built around a nitrided crankshaft, 2in-diameter big-end journals and siamesed bores, and it was crowned with a big-valve cylinder head. This work transformed the A-series into a freer-revving motor that realised 15bhp more than the lesser Cooper and punted the new model to a 95mph top speed.

The 1071cc Cooper 'S' was announced in March 1963, but volume production didn't start until the end of April, which allowed a sceptical BMC to evaluate demand. Needless to say, the hot Mini went down a storm because of its capabilities and performance – traits that demanded better, servo-assisted 7½in front disc brakes. Aside from badging on the grille and bootlid, the main visual differences were the fitment of 3.5J ventilated steel wheels and a 120mph speedometer. The 'S' shared colour and trim options with its older Cooper sibling, but it had a long list of optional extras, which included 4.5J wheels, an extra, right-hand-side fuel tank, a sump guard, a close-ratio gearbox and a choice of final-drive ratios.

8 EMO's competition CV is rather short – or at least it is in the conventional sense. Comps' relatively new chief, Stuart Turner, had entered two examples of the Cooper 'S', one Cooper and a brace of Austin-Healey 3000s into the 1963 RAC Rally. As number 21, 8 EMO ran twin 1½in SU H4 carburettors, an AEA731 camshaft, an 11:1 compression ratio, a 4.1:1 final drive and long-range lights running single-filament quartz-iodine bulbs. The car was driven by Paddy Hopkirk, with Henry Liddon navigating. The rally's route started in Blackpool and doodled its way all over the British mainland. Consisting of comparatively easy road sections punctuated by stages on Forestry Commission tracks, it also included a test at Oulton Park and a hillclimb on the Porlock toll road in Somerset. The final stage was held at Wareham, Dorset.

From top: even at rest, the Cooper 'S' is imbued with purposeful intent; Baxter and Scott were all set for '65 Monte before the 970cc engine blew

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The evening start in Blackpool resulted in a noise-test failure for some cars, including 8 EMO, along with a downpour, a miserable outlook for the Lake District and a police speed trap. The 'S' was one of 40 Minis starting the RAC – more than twice as many as the second most popular model, the Ford Cortina.

On Grizedale, Cumbria, the first of the 43 regularity special stages (three were cancelled due to the weather), 8 EMO was sixth behind fifth-placed Åke Andersson's Saab 96 and Harry Källström's Volkswagen 1500S in fourth. Ahead of them was Timo Mäkinen in one of the Comps Dept Big Healeys and Erik Carlsson's Saab 96 tied for second place. In the lead was the works Volvo PV544 of Tom Trana.

Towards the end of the event, *Motor Sport* noted that Porlock's toll road would 'make a very fine speed course if this ever comes about', before remarking that 'Paddy Hopkirk really had his Morris Cooper "S" going, holding it close in round the corners'. Due to the weather and Hopkirk's masterful drive, not much ink was expended on 8 EMO's RAC campaign.

The rally was won by Trana's Volvo, followed by Källström's VW, Carlsson's Saab and Hopkirk in fourth place overall. The Cooper 'S' was the highest-placed BMC finisher, with all its Comps siblings having completed the horrid, wet and muddy 2200-mile event. They contributed towards a total of 20 BMC competition cars that were among the RAC's 88 finishers.

In the 1964 season, 8 EMO was used as a reconnaissance and practice vehicle for events such as the Tulip and Alpine rallies, and as a testbed for new and improved competition Hydrolastic suspension components. The Cooper 'S' was rebuilt to 970cc specification with the new suspension for an assault on the 1-litre class at the 1965 Rallye Monte-Carlo with Raymond Baxter and Jack Scott. Sadly, though, as the car drove from Poland to the Minsk start, the fresh short-stroke A-series threw a rod, and it was a case of 'that's all folks'.

Returned to the Competitions Department's Abingdon base, 8 EMO was fitted with a new 1275cc 'S' engine for the 10th International Police Rally in Huddersfield. The Mini won not only the rally outright, but also the Inter-Nation, Marque Team and four other class prizes, being the only car to finish without a penalty. It then took part in the BMC Team Car Performance Evaluation Day at Silverstone before returning to its recon role. It was sold off to Burnley BMC dealer Oswald Tillotson in July 1966.

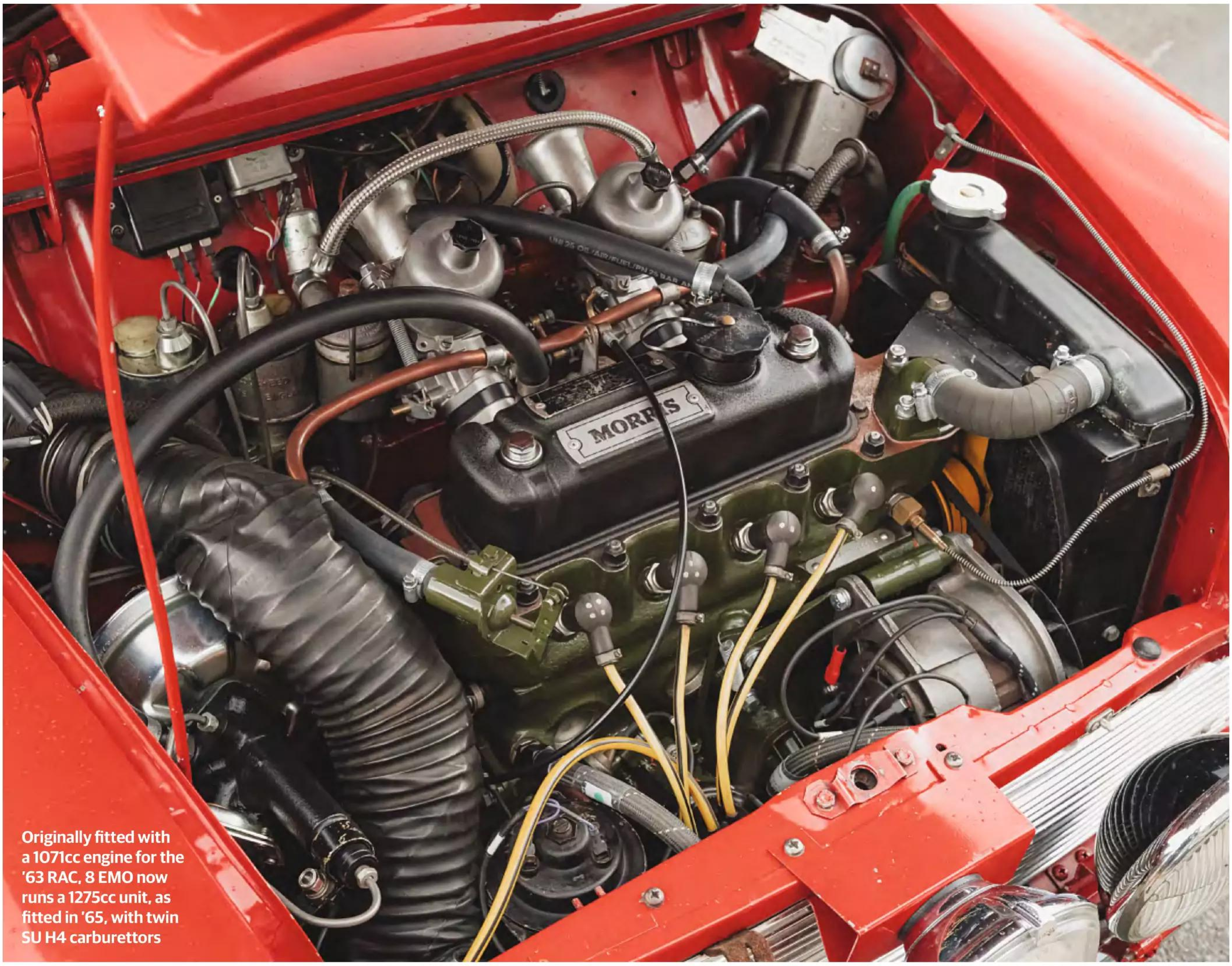
Privateer Geoff Halliwell drove 8 EMO on a number of rallies and hillclimbs, before the Mini went to two further custodians. It was eventually rediscovered in a dilapidated state, painted green, in 1983. It was later restored by owner and works Mini expert Robert Young, returning it to 1965 1275cc 'S' specification. In July 2024 it underwent another rebuild – one that thankfully kept Henry Liddon's cigarette burn on the passenger seat. Today, 8 EMO is believed to be the only works Mini Cooper 'S' to have been fitted by BMC with all three 'S'-specification engines.

'The swift, informative steering and the chassis' reactions are perfectly in tune with one another'

Eventually, after navigating some stop-startery, the traffic melts away and the road opens to curvy topography. Now it's time to enjoy the Mini's sharp throttle.

The view through the heated windscreen is soon melding and morphing rapidly. Comps was famous for its ability to transform cars from unremarkable to sensational, but with the Cooper 'S', the team was really pushing at an open door. The Mini's appetite for bends is positively gleeful, its front end quicker than Jimmy Carr taking out a heckler. Turn the leather Moto-Lita steering wheel just slightly

Tenacious grip plus lightning-quick steering and throttle responses keep up rapid pace. Above right: 'S' graces Mini Cooper badge



Originally fitted with a 1071cc engine for the '63 RAC, 8 EMO now runs a 1275cc unit, as fitted in '65, with twin SU H4 carburettors

and drivers used to the numbness of modernity will get a shock. The swift, informative steering and the chassis' reactions are perfectly in tune with one another. There is a complete absence of apathy and inertia – no pause, roll and settle in this command chain. More confidence means more speed, and here lies the key to the Mini legend. The self-centring and weighting of 8 EMO's steering, though, suggests that the Abingdon wizards have tinkered with its castor.

The main dials are largely superfluous, because anyone with an ounce of mechanical sympathy will change up before 6500rpm. As for the 120mph speedo, it is ignored because your eyeballs are far too busy inhaling the view that is pouring through the windscreen. Playtime is paused to take note of the gearing: 4500rpm at an indicated 60mph in top. At 3000rpm, the 1275cc starts to sound as if it means business, and at 5000rpm it is really getting worked up. It is a touch thrashy, but it never sounds unpleasant or savage. Power and torque delivery are both wonderfully linear, and sufficient to surprise the driver in a tailgating modern who clearly subscribes to the thinking that 'all old cars are slow cars'.

Should you get carried away, there is a fly-off handbrake. It's just one of a few touches the technicians bestowed on this Cooper 'S' to help it thrive in motorsport. There is also a heater-pipe wrapping for the gearstick to damp noise and vibration from the straight-cut gears, and a steering-column lowering bracket to make the driving position feel less *On the Buses*. Gears are easily selected, with a slight rubbery texture – only first needs a precautionary detour to second before slotting home. Is this the best 1960s Mini gearchange I've used? Definitely.

The aforementioned bucket seat and four-point harness really do help plug you into this charismatic little groover, enabling you to make the most of its handling and performance – although, once buckled in, only Mr Tickle would be able to reach the ignition key. Duly noted. Oh, and inevitably it comes with a BMC standard-issue electrical glitch – in 8 EMO's case, confused front indicators.

The open sidescreens and cavernous nature of the Mini's interior had made everything appear roomy and refreshing at first, but the environment has changed after the vigorous exercise. Gone is the ventilated breeziness, bullied out by boorish heat soak, which has gatecrashed the cabin and made the party atmosphere almost *too* balmy.

> *'Steer, guide and smile as the Cooper "S" skates through a sequence of esses on this titillating, cambered road'*

A glance at the temperatures: all is well, and there is time for one last blast. Squeeze the throttle and off the Mini flies, pumping through the gearbox's four ratios to a speed that feels right for what lies ahead. Steer, guide and smile as the Cooper 'S' skates through a sequence of esses on this titillating, cambered road. At the apex of each there is a notional sense that the inside front wheel is almost pawing at the air. Of course this shouldn't come as a surprise, because this innate ability to build and hog momentum is why this little car became such a giant on stage, screen and race track.

A smile becomes a wicked grin because of the weight, tactility and connection of the controls. It is petrol-fired therapy that makes any troubles or concerns fall away, tumbling into the grass and hedgerows beside us. Yes, it has been a while since I've spent much time with one of Issigonis' 10ft marvels, but I think this drive with 8 EMO has been the most fun I've had with a Mini. It's a hoot.

***Thanks to** Broad Arrow, where 8 EMO is for sale (07843 000952; broadarrowprivatesales.com)*

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Clockwise from left: it's roomy once you're in, but the driving position is awkward; Smith's timer; colour-coded bungees; period-correct Halda Twinmaster tripmeter

Clockwise from above: Dymo labels on dash; deep bucket seats; roof-mounted spotlight can be adjusted from inside; 120mph speedo for 1963 Cooper 'S'; co-driver's map light

Evening News
DUNLOP
Tony Pond
SUN

"Now, I probably shouldn't be telling you this..."

Renowned engineer Wynne Mitchell was at rallying's sharp end in the 1970s and '80s – and he doesn't mind sharing a few secrets

WORDS **RICHARD HESELTINE** PHOTOGRAPHY **JACK HARRISON/GETTY/McKLEIN**

SUNBEAM
DUNLOP
EVC 444T
Shell

Tony Pond attacks the Eaton Yale Rallysprint in the Talbot Sunbeam Lotus, a car Wynne Mitchell helped conceive. Right: Wynne has fond memories of his days on the rallying scene

The anecdote has thus far been delivered by detour and digression. Wynne Mitchell is doubled up in mirth as he recounts a story surrounding Tony Pond's third-place finish on the 1985 RAC Rally of Great Britain. The event marked the international debut for the MG Metro 6R4, which he'd helped midwife into being. Behind the scenes, however, it was chaos after the competition chief's Rover SD1 chase car blew its engine when exiting Carlisle. It was at this juncture that a secondhand Saab was appropriated from a forecourt, a Range Rover was purloined and a Mercedes-Benz hired.

"It was a madhouse," our hero insists. "Honestly, you wouldn't believe some of the things that went on behind the scenes on rallies back then. I didn't believe them at the time, and I was there. You did what you had to do to keep going." And with that, conversation turns to an only partially libellous story surrounding a former star driver's after-hours activities; this then coalesces into a yarn involving high-profile team principals' misdeeds. "Now, I probably shouldn't be telling you this," he invariably says, before segueing into another story that is annoyingly unprintable.

Wynne Mitchell is instantly likeable and almost pathologically humble, conferring credit on others rather than basking in the glow of his own achievements. His dabs are all over many a rally weapon and also several well-known road cars. "I was born in Glyncorrwg," he says. "My father had buses, and his family before him had charabancs and taxis, so the interest in transport was always there. When I left school, some of my friends went down the mines and some went to the steelworks. A few got into teaching. That didn't interest me.

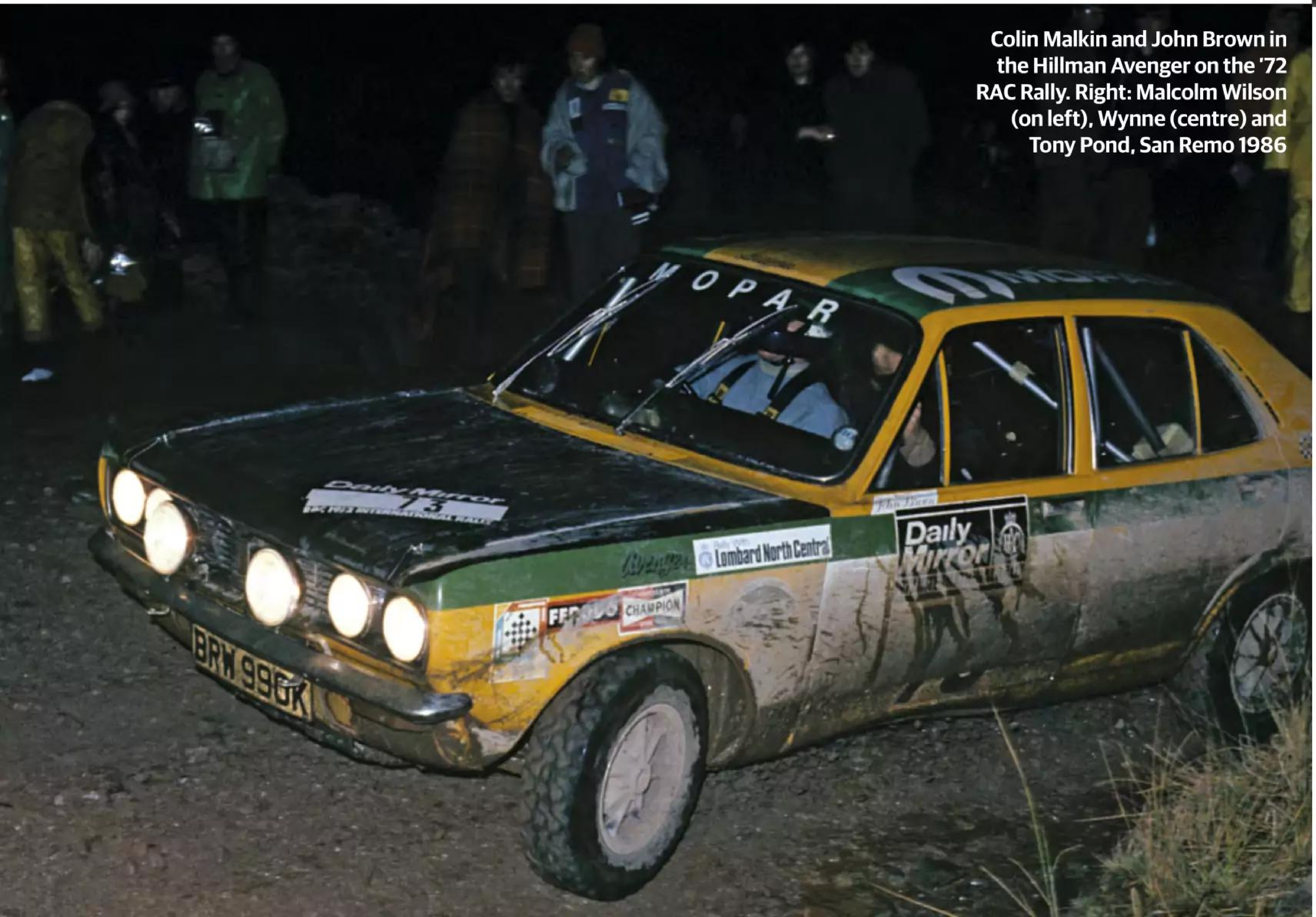
"I wanted to do something that involved cars, but there was nothing in South Wales. Then I saw an advert in *The Autocar*: Jaguar had a few vacancies for students. I wrote to them and then went to Coventry for an interview. I was told to finish my A-levels and apply the following year." He finished his studies, but instead joined the Rootes Group in 1955. Wynne adds: "I did a sandwich course in mechanical engineering at Aston University as part of my training. I then worked in Ryton, where the Hillman Imp was being developed."

Warming to the theme, he continues: "In time, I became project development engineer for the Imp Sport and the Asp sports car, which sadly didn't come to anything. I then became the liaison between the competitions department and the engineering side. That started in 1965 and it was an eye-opener. I remember going to Bagshot, where the rally Imp was being tested by Peter Harper. There were these one-in-three ramps and Peter had the accelerator flat against the bulkhead as he went through the gears – and this as we went downhill. I thought he had lost his mind."

Cue more laughter. Motorsport would then provide a welcome distraction from, say, Federalising the Hillman Avenger-based Plymouth Cricket for the US market. "You have to remember what it was like back then," explains Wynne. "There were five-year plans every few months, and obviously Chrysler exerted more and more influence [it assumed complete control in 1970]. We won the London-

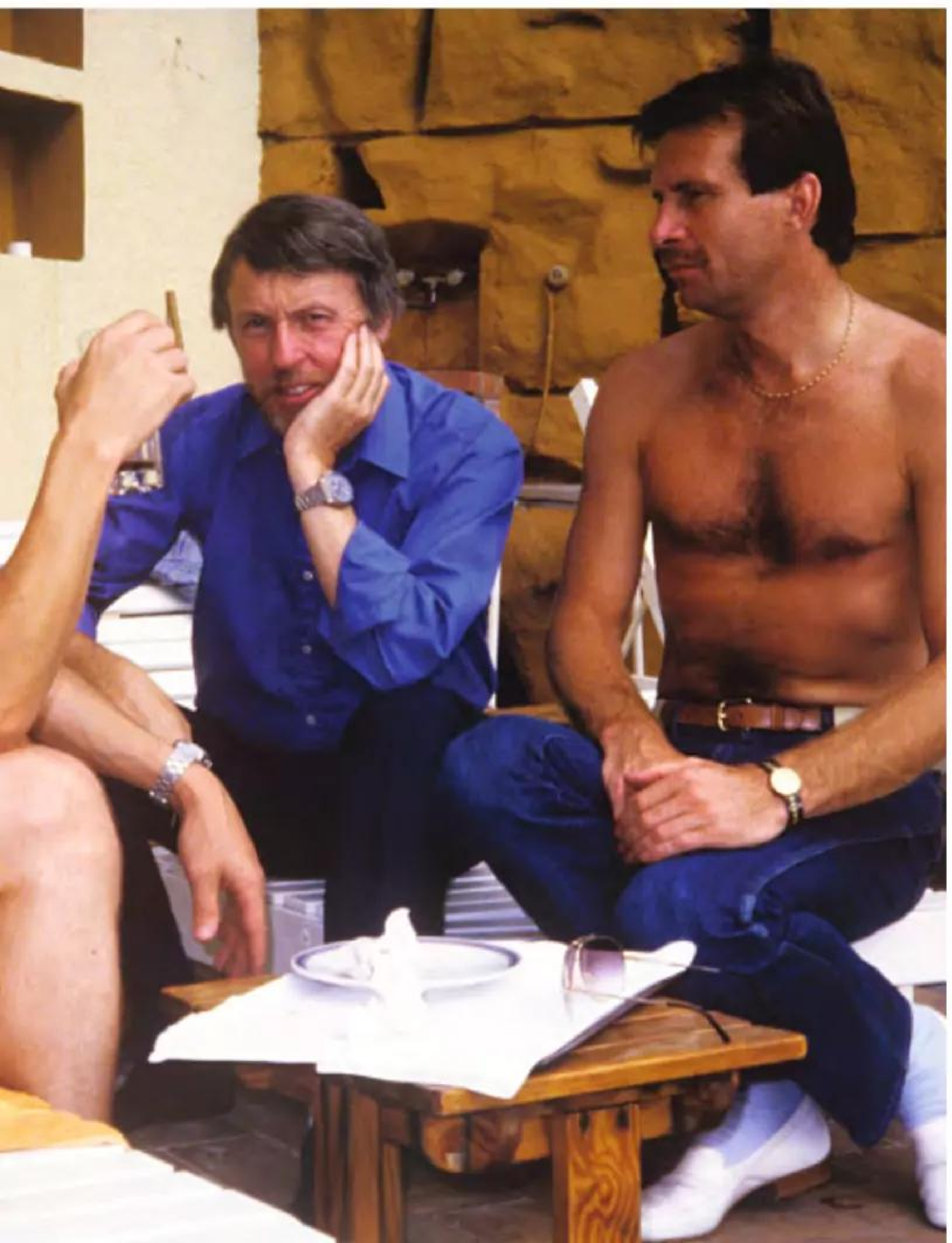
"I became quite proficient at forging Geoffrey's signature. I went to chapel quite a few times, begging for forgiveness"

Tony Pond and Rob Arthur took the MG 6R4 to third place on the '85 RAC Rally. Above left: the rally workload was tough, but Wynne has no regrets



Colin Malkin and John Brown in the Hillman Avenger on the '72 RAC Rally. Right: Malcolm Wilson (on left), Wynne (centre) and Tony Pond, San Remo 1986

C869 EUD
COMPUTERVISION
10



Sydney Rally in late 1968 and the competition department was closed the following March. After that we sort of ticked over on the quiet.

"We properly reopened in October 1972 and did the RAC Rally a month later, with Colin Malkin in a 93bhp Avenger. That year, we – the Chrysler Competitions Centre – came up with the Avenger Tiger. We decided on the springs, damper settings and so on, while the styling department dolled it up with spoilers and stripes. To the outside world, I was the assistant competitions manager to the boss, Des O'Dell; internally, I was the administrator. One of my jobs was to sort the homologation for rallying."

Which meant the Avenger, explains Wynne: "Neil Eason-Gibson at the RAC suggested we homologated it for Group 1 with twin carbs. I thought we couldn't do that for the regular car because we hadn't made enough of them, but the Tiger had them. But if Neil was suggesting it, and he was the one who checked everything, then why not? I remember needing a signature from Geoffrey Ellison, a senior director at Chrysler. He said: 'What am I committing perjury for now?' It got to the point that I didn't bother Geoffrey. I became quite proficient at forging his signature. I went to chapel quite a few times, begging for forgiveness."

Then there was the Avenger BRM, which competed despite not being a catalogued model. "There were to have been three versions," says Wynne. "A pushrod-engined car, a GT with an overhead-cam unit and a twin-cam. BRM came up with a four-valve head, which put noses out of joint internally because the engineering boys felt they could have come up with something. There was a cachet to the BRM name, though. The idea was for it to be a bit like the Lotus Cortina. It didn't happen, which was down to the product-planning people, not us.

"The first rally with the Avenger BRM was the Cheltenham Festival in October 1974, when Colin drove our old test car fitted with a road-spec BRM engine to outright victory. It was an unofficial entry, though. The Avenger BRM's first 'proper' event was the Circuit of Ireland rally in March 1975. The engine here had been built by BRM in its entirety, and the piston

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The team persevered, but a new weapon was clearly needed. Enter the Sunbeam Lotus. Wynne says: "The Sunbeam was based on the Avenger platform, and I looked into seeing if the engine Lotus used in the Elite would fit. I didn't want to bother them until I knew it would go in, so I phoned Mike Jones, who was chief engineer at Jensen – they had used it in the Jensen-Healey. He said there was an engine in the experimental department we could borrow, and we subsequently put it in an Avenger.

"After that, I phoned Mike Kimberley, who was the MD at Lotus. Mike and I had been at college together. Anyway, Des, development engineering director Peter Wilson and I had a chat with Mike and the Lotus engine man, Graham Atkin. We wanted 230bhp in rally spec, which is what the BDA-engined Escorts were making. It ended up at 2.2 litres, but the point is we thrashed something out but then had to persuade the management to make road cars. I left that to Des, who was very political."

Des O'Dell took Ellison for a spin in a Lotus-powered Avenger GLS and, at a stroke, the kernel of a new competition-led model took shape. "He loved the car and asked if it had the BRM engine," Wynne continues. "Des opened the bonnet and Geoffrey saw it was a Lotus unit. That got the wheels turning in his mind. He then spoke to the board. The contract was signed with Lotus towards the end of 1978, and we borrowed Tony Pond from British Leyland Motorsport to test the rally car.

"It was very kind of BL's competitions manager, John Davenport, but of course he received feedback about what we were doing. Tony then drove for us in 1979, but things went sour between him and Des. Anyway, we had to homologate the car and prove we had made a sufficient number so it could run in Group 4 that season. Let's just say we got the paperwork and leave it at that!" A year later, Henri Toivonen drove a works car to victory on the RAC Rally of Great Britain, but Wynne wasn't around to witness this triumph.

"Williams had designed a racing car: it wasn't ever going to withstand an international rally or be serviceable in the sticks"

"I did 24 years at the company as Rootes, Chrysler and then Talbot," he explains. "I won't say that I fell out with Des exactly, but I'd had enough so I walked away from the sport. I became the chief project manager working on the final-drive unit for the MCV-80 – a tank to you and me. I had no involvement with rallying for 18 months, and then Bill Blydenstein phoned me late one Saturday afternoon: Gerry Johnstone was leaving as his development man, and might I be interested in helping?"

Test Book
Metro 6R4
1

Wynne carefully logged the development of the 6R4, from Williams-designed prototype to Group B rally weapon

Having quit motorsport in part due to the antisocial hours, Wynne soon found himself busier than ever. "I worked for Bill on the Chevette HSRs under Dealer Team Vauxhall, but also on the Nissan 240RS programme," he says. "I joined Bill on the understanding I would work on weekends and holidays, and it soon took over. In 1982 I went with Tony Pond to the Corsica rally in a Nissan. After he made the start I caught a flight to do the Circuit of Ireland, where Russell Brookes and Terry Kaby were driving the Vauxhalls. That wasn't unusual."

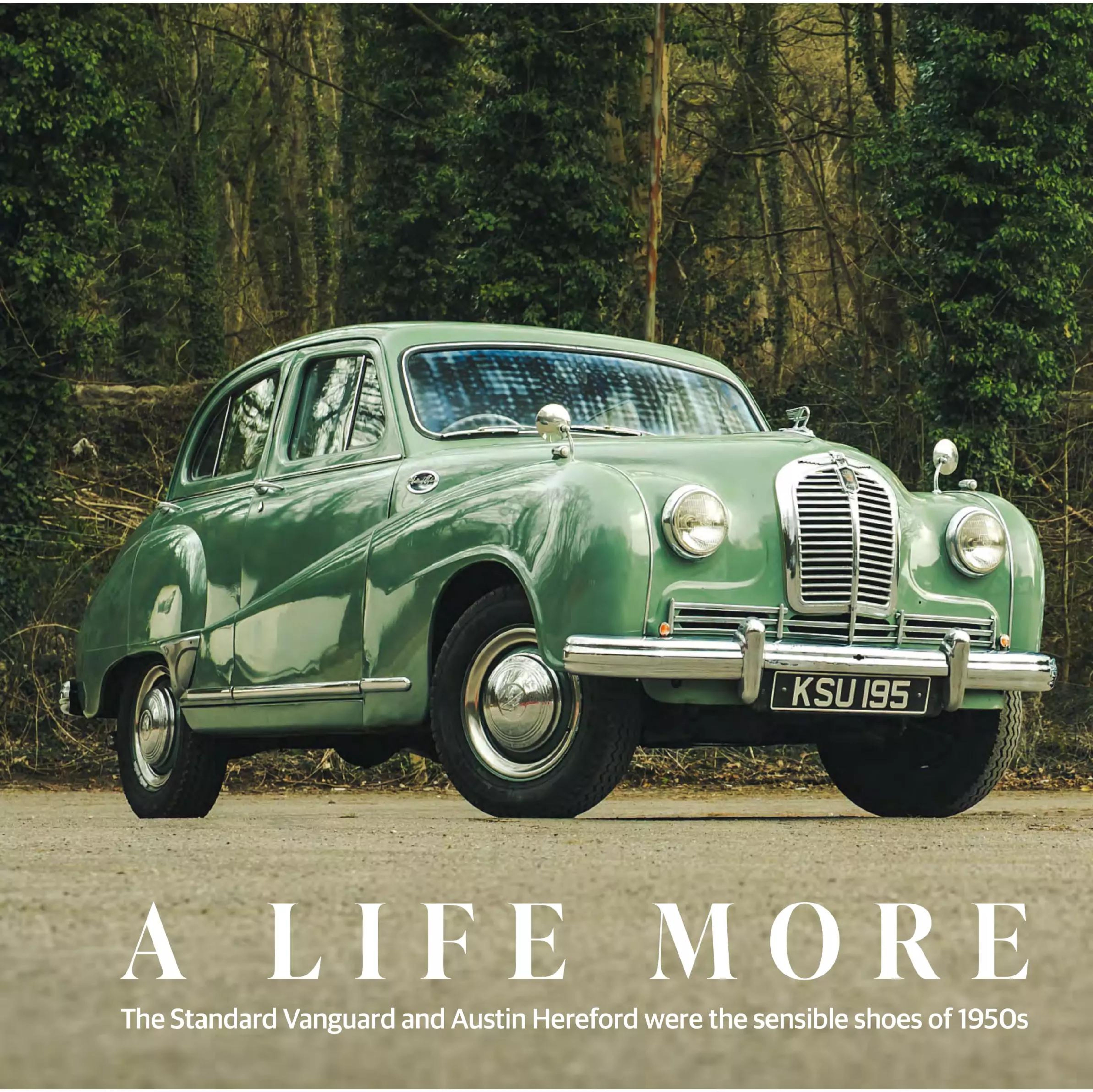
There then followed a full-time return to motorsport with Audi Sport, which lasted eight months before Wynne joined the MG Metro 6R4 programme. "John Davenport handwrote a contract," he says. "I signed it in July 1984, and to begin with I was a sort of 'engineer without portfolio'. Originally, the car was to have been powered by a normally aspirated Honda V6, but that never materialised. The whole car underwent so many changes, some of them imposed on us. For example, Michelin decreed we wouldn't be going with 340mm tyres. Suddenly they were 390mm.

"Williams had designed a racing car. It wasn't ever going to withstand an international rally or be serviceable out in the sticks. As such, we had to modify and strengthen it. Finishing third on the RAC in 1985 was brilliant, but we had a terrible start to the '86 season due to silly things. Then, of course, Group B was banned in March of that year after spectators were killed on Rally Portugal. That was supposedly on the grounds of safety. If that was the case, it should have been banned immediately, but the FIA decided to carry on until December."

With nothing to campaign, Austin Rover's motorsport activities soon came to a juddering halt. "We looked into doing a Paris-Dakar rally car based on the Rover 800, but it was all over by March 1987. I got involved in concept engineering with Austin Rover and was then approached by Tom Walkinshaw. However, Tony Pond was keen to set up on his own, so I stalled for time with Tom until Tony had made up his mind. We then formed Tony Pond Racing. We mostly worked for Rover. We did the development and sorted the specification for the 216GTi and Tomcat coupé one-make championships, and for the MGF Cup.

"I also worked for Mitsubishi, or rather Ralliart, but still under the guise of Tony Pond Racing. I was involved in so many projects, though, including the Bonneville record attempt with the MG EX-F. We did 217mph in 1999 with just 1.4 litres. A year later, we went back with twin-supercharged V8 power [with the EX255], but the department that built the spaceframe was five weeks late delivering what it had promised. That impacted on everything else. MG Rover had got Fina to put in some money, so we had to go. It was hopeless."

Pond's passing in 2002 affected Wynne greatly – and not just professionally. "Tony was a super driver, but more than that, he was a friend," he says. "After he died I worked for Prodrive, but I was loaned out to work with Jaguar on the supercharged X-type programme. I retired in 2004. I'm not involved in motorsport any more, but I still have my choir practice. I did that every Tuesday evening throughout my time in motorsport. It was the only thing that kept me sane, because I gave up so much when I was rallying." Pause. Ponder. "I wouldn't have missed it for the world."



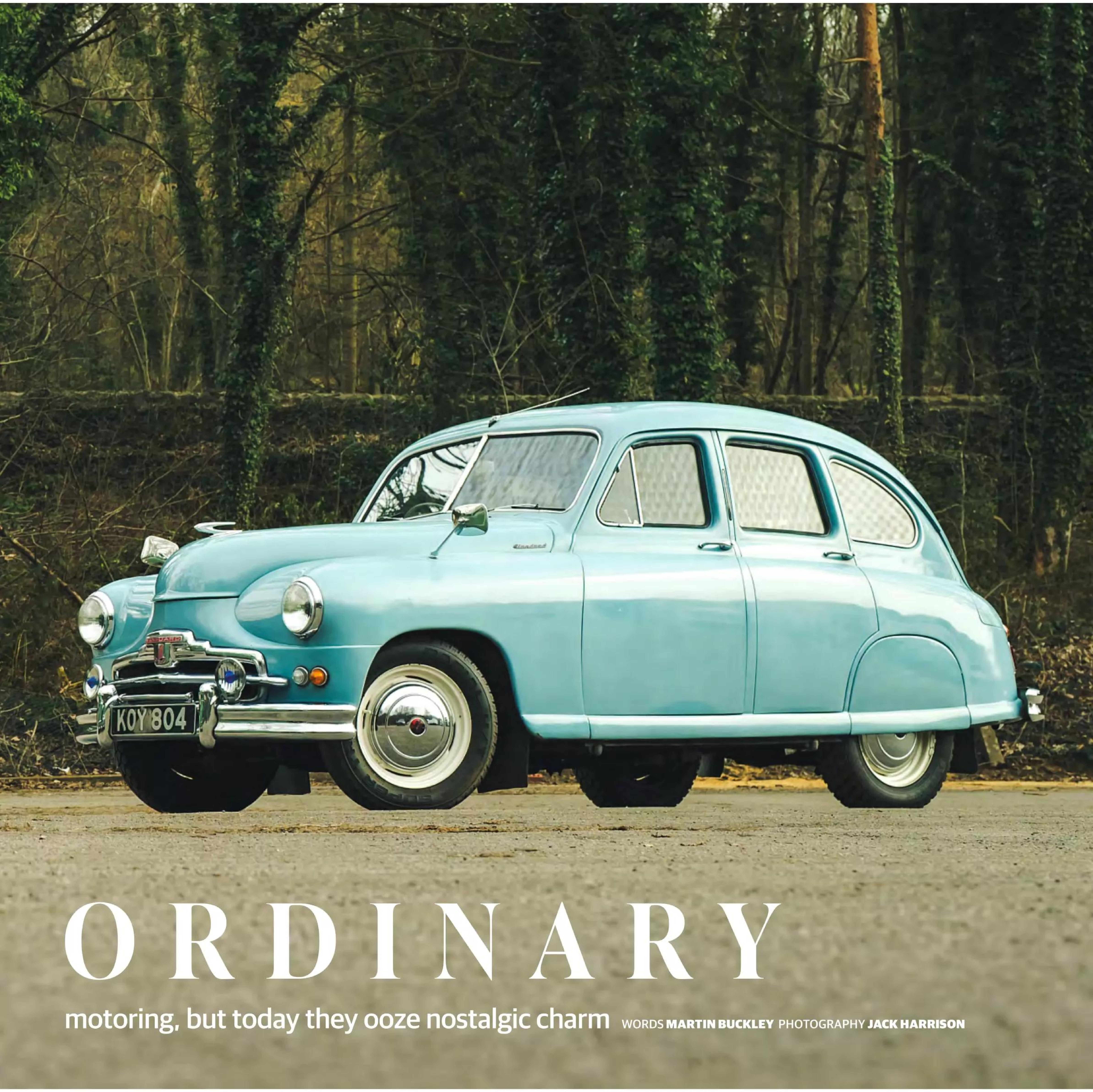
A LIFE MORE

The Standard Vanguard and Austin Hereford were the sensible shoes of 1950s

It seems to me that old cars are the nearest thing we have to working time machines: they are ideal for triggering memories, or even the feel and flavour of a particular era. Sports cars, of course, are great – who doesn't love an XK120, a TR2 or an MGA? But it is the more mundane saloons that were much more significant in most people's lives. If you were alive in the 1950s, these were the cars that took you to school, to the shops or on holiday. It is the ordinary family saloons, the vehicles nobody gets very excited about, that become more fascinating with every passing year. Much less celebrated, rarely restored or preserved, they combine ordinariness with rarity – and therein lies the fascination.

The bulbous and burbling Austin Hereford and Standard Vanguard are exemplars of the 'car as time machine' idea. They are very old models now – older today than the veterans were in *Genevieve* – but without either the rustic charm of their pre-war ancestors or the two-tone, coffee-bar kitsch of a 'shoebox' Ford Zephyr. They are semi-forgotten relics of a lost world of early '50s British popular motoring.

Priced below £700 (around £33,000 in today's money, in an era before freely available credit) and good for about 80mph on 68bhp, the Hereford and Vanguard went bumper-to-bumper to win the favours of the middle-class buyer in both British and colonial markets. They have family rather than sporting values (although in both cases their relatively lusty engines went on to find fame in sports cars) and conjure images of idealised post-war



ORDINARY

motoring, but today they ooze nostalgic charm

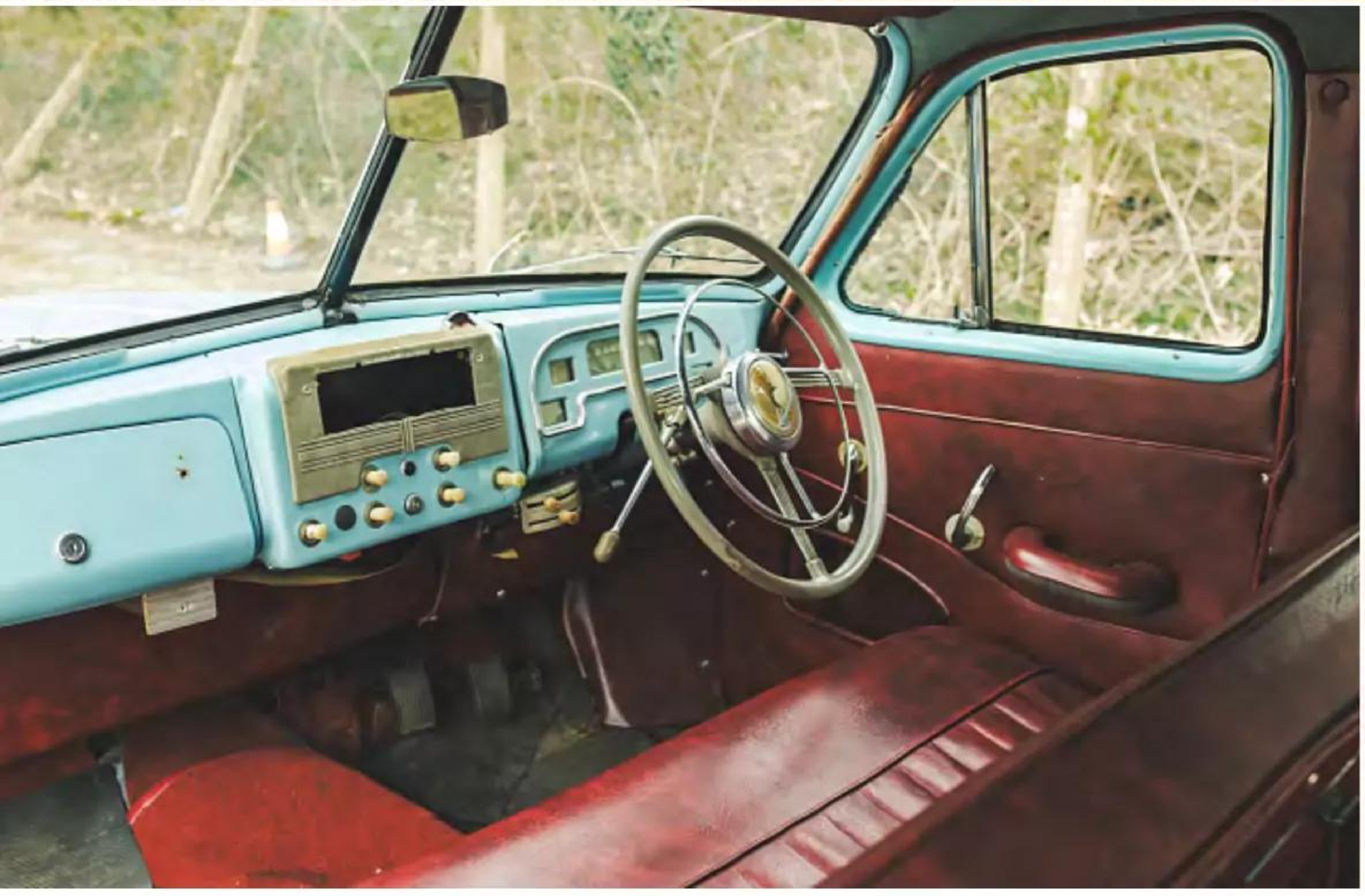
WORDS **MARTIN BUCKLEY** PHOTOGRAPHY **JACK HARRISON**

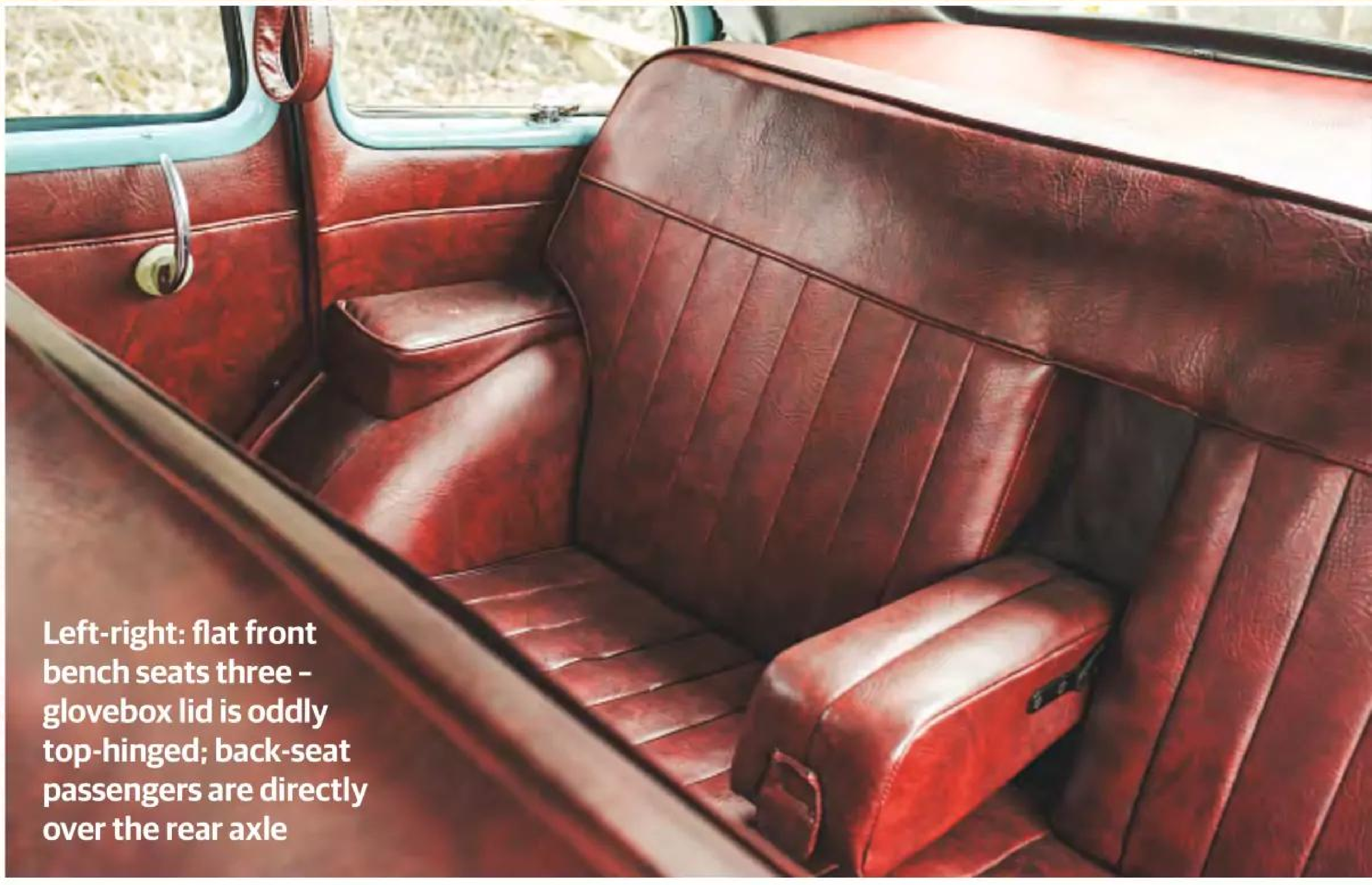
households in dimly lit parlours clustered around glowing radiograms. Nothing about them speaks of sex appeal or glamour, yet they were important models that sold in important numbers – 184,799 in the case of the Phase 1 and 1A Vanguards between 1948 and '52.

These were simple cars for simpler times. Even the range of colours was limited to five or six options – pick from red, blue, cream or green for the A70. But in the mind's eye such cars were mostly austerity black. Equally, there were no 'trim levels' and few, if any, extras. Yet official alternative versions of both cars were produced: Vanguard 'utes' were popular with the RAF, and there was a van-with-windows estate. Austin produced a drophead coupé version of the A70 (by Carbodies; it only found 266 buyers) and a woodie station wagon. The three-box, Phase 2 Vanguard would be the first British car to offer a diesel option.

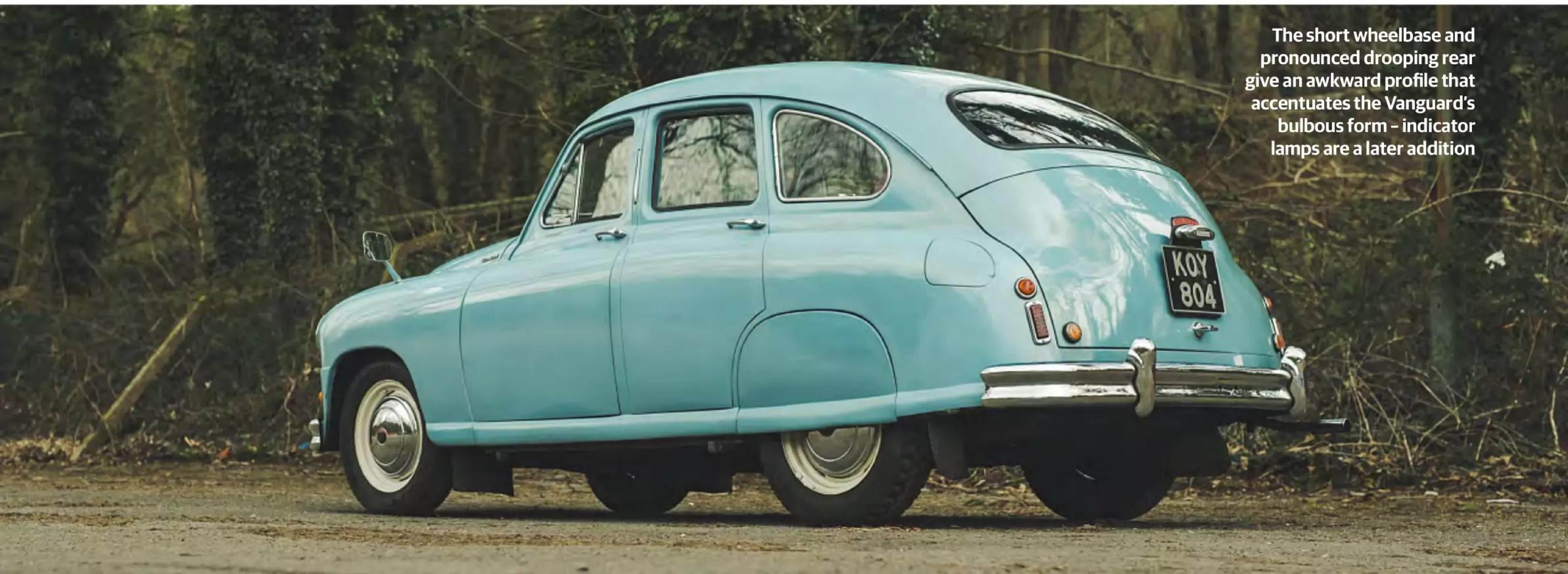
Both brands are now long dead, but they resonated as trusted, sensible choices in the 1950s. They were built for the buyer looking for a spacious, reliable saloon in the modern, post-war idiom, when niceties such as overhead valves, heaters and fully hydraulic brakes were starting to become the norm rather than the exception, and when independent front suspension was pretty much taken for granted (both cars had lever-arm dampers at the front doubling as top wishbones) and solid rear axles with semi-elliptic leaf springs were widespread.

Such details are discussed in full in the brochures for the Vanguard and A70. A level of technical interest on the part of the buyer was assumed, and the use of colourful artwork

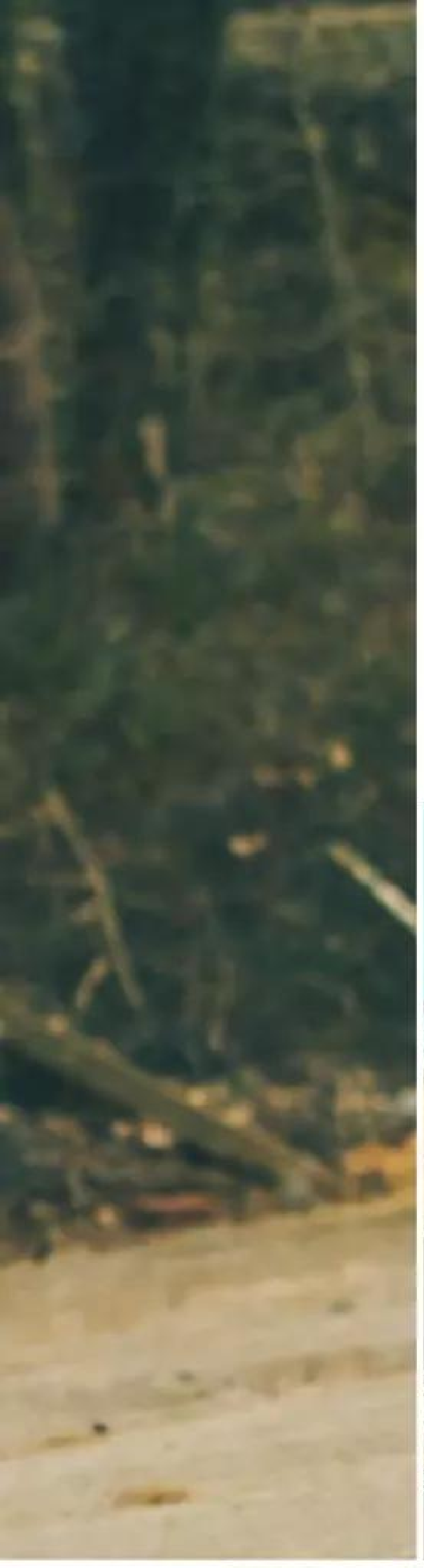




Left-right: flat front bench seats three – glovebox lid is oddly top-hinged; back-seat passengers are directly over the rear axle



The short wheelbase and pronounced drooping rear give an awkward profile that accentuates the Vanguard's bulbous form – indicator lamps are a later addition



Clockwise from left: Vanguard's cod-American looks were inspired by Plymouth; badge tops thick chrome grille; trafficator switch on wheel boss

Standard's long-serving 2088cc wet-liner 'four' proved durable in a variety of applications

allowed the occupants of the cars to appear as emaciated pigmies to increase the impression of spaciousness. The vehicles do not get off lightly at times in these wonderfully evocative documents: the depiction of the Vanguard in one early pamphlet is so distorted you wonder if the artist ever saw one in the metal.

In both cases, the copywriters are keen to note that these saloons are big enough for all the family, but not so large they would struggle to fit in an average domestic garage: this was an era when people still put the car away at night and lovingly washed it themselves on a Sunday.

They appeared up to date, but both A70 and Vanguard had two wheels in the past. Under these modern, full-width bodies, they clung to separate, box-section chassis construction and long-stroke, low-compression but relatively large four-cylinder engines. The latter was to cope with the low-octane fuels of the day, the former an expediency of production that favoured the adaptability of body-on-frame construction when it came to putting together knocked-down kits for crucial export markets.

Introduced in 1947 (for May 1948 export-only production), the humpbacked, Canley-built Standard Vanguard caused almost as much of a stir at the first post-war motor show as the Morris Minor and Jaguar XK120. The 'Made in Britain, designed for the world' Vanguard had been conceived towards the end of the war by Standard's Sir John Black specifically for export (only by shipping out 90% of production were car makers allocated steel). It was designed, with 8in of ground clearance, to be as at home on the smooth American or Canadian highways as it was on rutted Australian or African tracks, while being equally at ease parked in an English market town.

Not that many Vanguards were seen in the UK before 1951 or '52, and if you did manage to buy one you had to agree not to sell it for at least two years to discourage black-market profiteering. British buyers ordering in 1948 were quoted delivery times as long as six years. Cars were exported to 75 countries and, for some time, you were more likely to spot one in Germany, where it was a top-selling model of the early post-war years. Vanguards were also popular in Sweden, Belgium and Australia, where they were assembled from kits.

Named after a famous Royal Navy battleship, the Vanguard was one of the first all-new British post-war cars. It had a new, wet-liner (no more rebores) 2088cc engine of legendary ruggedness with modern, replaceable thin-wall bearing shells; it was also to be found in TR sports cars and the 'little grey' Ferguson tractor. This was teamed with a three-speed, all-synchro column change that moved from the right to the left of the wheel in 1950. Around that time the Vanguard was the first car offered with Laycock overdrive, on second and third gears.

The American-inspired looks were no accident: Sir John Black had sent his stylist, Walter Belgrove, to London to sketch and take inspiration from the 1941 Plymouths parked on Grosvenor Square, near the US Embassy. Fisher and Ludlow then built the shell, which was updated to Phase 1A specification in 1952 with a lower bonnet line, a chunkier grille and a wider rear 'screen, as shown here.

That Austin sold only 50,000 Herefords has to be set against the fact that, while Standard was sticking to a strict one-model policy with the 500-a-day Vanguard, Longbridge was making an entire range of cars, from the A30 to the A135 Princess. Even so, the Vanguard's success seriously irked Sir Leonard Lord of Austin.

In truth, the 1950 Hereford was really his second attempt at taking on the Vanguard in the large-car market. The 1948 Hampshire had the 2199cc overhead-valve four-cylinder from the 1945 16hp saloon it had replaced, and a beefed-up A40 Devon chassis clothed in a six-light body that wanted for rear legroom. This put off buyers, plus the fact that its styling was too evidently derived from the smaller car. If anything, the A70 Hereford and A40 Somerset compounded this latter sin by being almost indiscernible from each other at a distance – they even shared door pressings. When the A30 appeared in 1952, some unkind wags remarked that the Austin range now looked like a perfect family of matching Toby jugs.

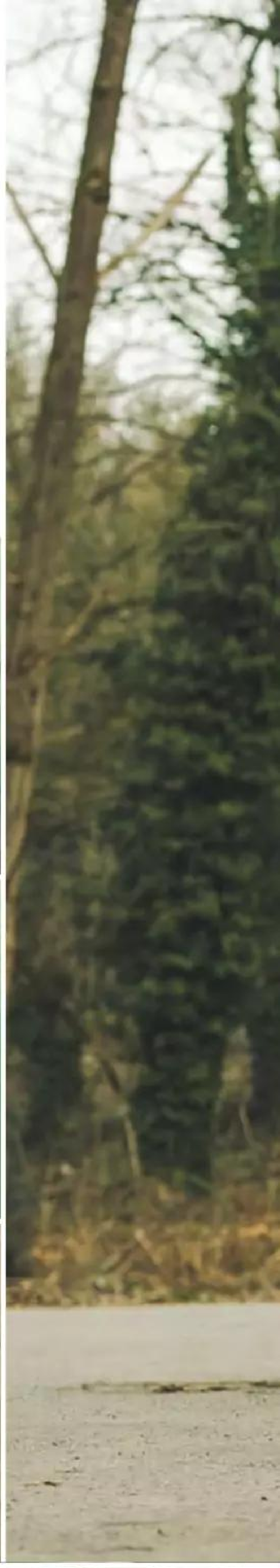
'These cuddly six-seaters look somewhat unreal, like giant tin toys rather than objects in which people drove around'

However, by adding 6½in to the wheelbase, the senior model at least got decent rear passenger room; wider front and rear tracks, and fully hydraulic brakes (the Hampshire had mechanically operated rears) helped the road behaviour. As before, the styling was by Dick Burzi, the Italian who had joined Austin from Lancia in the 1920s. The rumour that the BMW 501's lines were inspired by his A70 Hampshire is flattering and plausible.

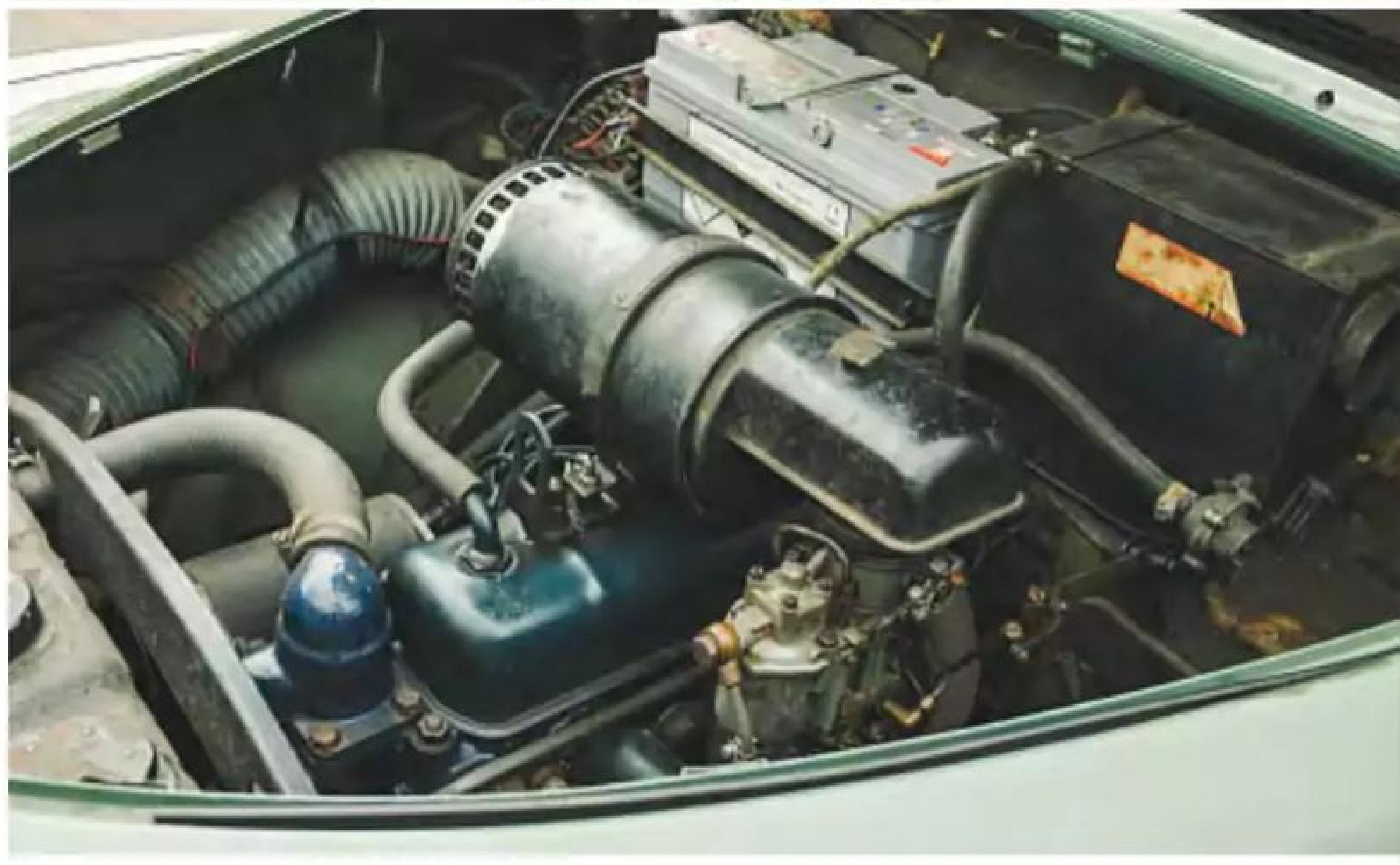
Sitting high and narrow on 16in wheels, and with hardly a straight edge in sight on their all-enveloping flanks, these cuddly six-seaters look somewhat unreal, like giant tin toys rather than objects in which people drove around.

STANDARD VANGUARD PHASE IA

Sold/number built 1948-'52/184,799 (all Phase 1s)
Construction steel body and separate chassis
Engine all-iron, ohv 2088cc 'four', single Solex carburettor
Max power 68bhp @ 4200rpm
Max torque 108lb ft @ 2000rpm
Transmission three-speed manual with overdrive, RWD
Suspension: front independent, by wishbones, coil springs **rear** live axle, semi-elliptic leaf springs; anti-roll bar, lever-arm dampers f/r
Steering cam and roller **Brakes** drums
Length 13ft 7in (4140mm)
Width 5ft 8½in (1740mm)
Height 5ft 3¼in (1607mm)
Wheelbase 7ft 10in (2388mm)
Weight 2800lb (1270kg)
0-60mph 24 secs
Top speed 81mph **Mpg** 26
Price new £630
Price now £7000



Right: the Austin better contains its body roll in corners. Below, from top: winged grille badge; patriotic confirmation; sleek bonnet mascot



The A70's 2199cc 'four' musters a modest 68bhp, but it's gutsy and flexible enough once you're on the move

Yet they were the road furniture of 70 years ago, a time when most people didn't have a fridge, a television or even a home telephone line.

Unlike modern cars, they are at least easy to tell apart. The Hereford, with its 'Flying A' bonnet mascot, upright grille and bustle tail, is more obviously British and even has an 'Austin of England' script on either side of its bonnet. The Vanguard, with its tall, domed roof and bullnose bonnet, is a less compromising shape. Walter Belgrove was unhappy with the short wheelbase – the body falls away so abruptly at the rear it that could, in profile, be one of Dr Kamm's experimental 1930s BMWs. The effect, particularly to modern eyes, is bizarre.

You are struck by how small both cars' brake and indicator lights look on their big, rounded rear ends. The Austin has the larger boot, but, oddly, the lid is bottom-hinged.

Inside, what once looked like decadence appears bleak today, with flat, unsupportive seats, plain door cards and modest instruments on unyielding metal dashboards. These must be among the first British cars to have column changes and bench front seats so they could seat six at pinch. Headroom is generous, too, so everyone could wear a hat.

'The A70 and Vanguard impress with a sense of spaciousness combined with a comfortable, lolloping ride'

The Austin is set up for left- or right-hand drive by dint of having its circular 90mph speedo, rectangular minor gauges and Bakelite switchgear in the centre; equally, the Standard's instrument pack could be swapped easily to the left for export. Both cars have separate starter buttons and oil-pressure gauges, along with trafficator switches on the wheel's centre boss. The Austin is roomier in the back.

Looking out over the high scuttles and rounded bonnets of both cars, you notice how tiny their windscreen wipers are. The Standard kept its distinctive split windscreen until the coming of the Phase 2 in 1953.

The driving positions in the Vanguard and the Hereford are pretty much 'one size fits all', with floor-hinged pedals and no backrest adjustment. The transmission humps in both cars are prominent, and you must sit close to the big steering wheels to exert the necessary leverage when parking – the Standard has the tighter turning circle, but lower gearing.

That said, despite their bulky appearances, neither the A70 nor Vanguard was hefty to handle by the standards of the day; today, the cars largely impress thanks to a general sense of spaciousness that is combined with a comfortable, lolloping ride on soft dampers and tall, skinny tyres.

The Austin rolls less than the Standard and nods its prow more under braking. Both cars are set up to understeer moderately but persistently. The short-wheelbase Vanguard feels the least happy of the two being thrown about, and its brakes are less reassuring.

Torquey engines and low overall gearing keep the gearchanging to a minimum, and you can routinely pull away in second in each. Bottom is 'crash' in the A70, and third would have taken you to almost 60mph in the cars' prime, but you drive around in top for most purposes, and only when pulling away from low speeds do you notice this is a 'four' rather than a 'six'. The A70 was considered reasonably brisk in its day, capable of 70mph cruising, 30-50mph in 9 secs and able to take a 1-in-20 hill at 65mph in top. With some justification, *The Autocar* called the A70 a 'goer'.

The Vanguard is similarly sweet-sounding, with lusty mid-range pull that suits its gearing: the idea is that you get into top and stay there as long as possible. It has the niftier gearchange, whereas you can sometimes get a bit lost in the Hereford's sloppy linkage.

In some ways the success of the Standard Vanguard is a reflection of the lack of plausible rivals. That would change dramatically in 1950 when Ford introduced the first Zephyr, with its lightweight monocoque body, MacPherson-strut front suspension and short-stroke straight-six. BMC countered the success of the Ford fairly effectively with its monocoque Cambridge and Westminster (from the mid-'50s on), but the monocoque Vanguards never recaptured the earlier models' success.

Neither car set the heather alight even when they were new, yet they have too much period charm to be dismissed today as 'grey porridge'. Let's call them austerity saloons: Festival of Britain cars that epitomise a time somewhere between Sir Stafford Cripps' 'export or die' and the Suez Crisis – that now very distant, pre-motorway era of smog, steam trains and capital punishment, when few men stepped outside without a hat, everyone smoked, foul language was confined to the saloon bar of the local public house and rationing was still an everyday reality. The Vanguard and A70 were rugged and fit for purpose at the very least in the context of their era.

Thanks to *Great British Car Journey (greatbritishcarjourney.com)*

AUSTIN A70 HEREFORD

Sold/number built 1950-'54/48,640 (saloons)
Construction steel body and separate chassis
Engine all-iron, ohv 2199cc 'four', single Zenith carburettor
Max power 68bhp @ 3800rpm
Max torque 116lb ft @ 1700rpm
Transmission four-speed manual, RWD
Suspension: front independent, by wishbones, coil springs **rear** live axle, semi-elliptic leaf springs; lever-arm dampers f/r
Steering cam and peg **Brakes** drums
Length 13ft 11½in (4255mm)
Width 5ft 9⅔in (4818mm)
Height 5ft 5⅔in (1668mm)
Wheelbase 8ft 3in (2515mm)
Weight 2825lb (1281kg)
0-60mph 21 secs
Top speed 81mph **Mpg** 22
Price new £668
Price now £7000

Left-right: Hereford's rear cabin is the more accommodating; central speedo facilitates the conversion to LHD

Hydraulic brakes all round in the more conventionally styled Austin. Right: upright front grille and simple chrome embellishments

CONQUEST SELLER

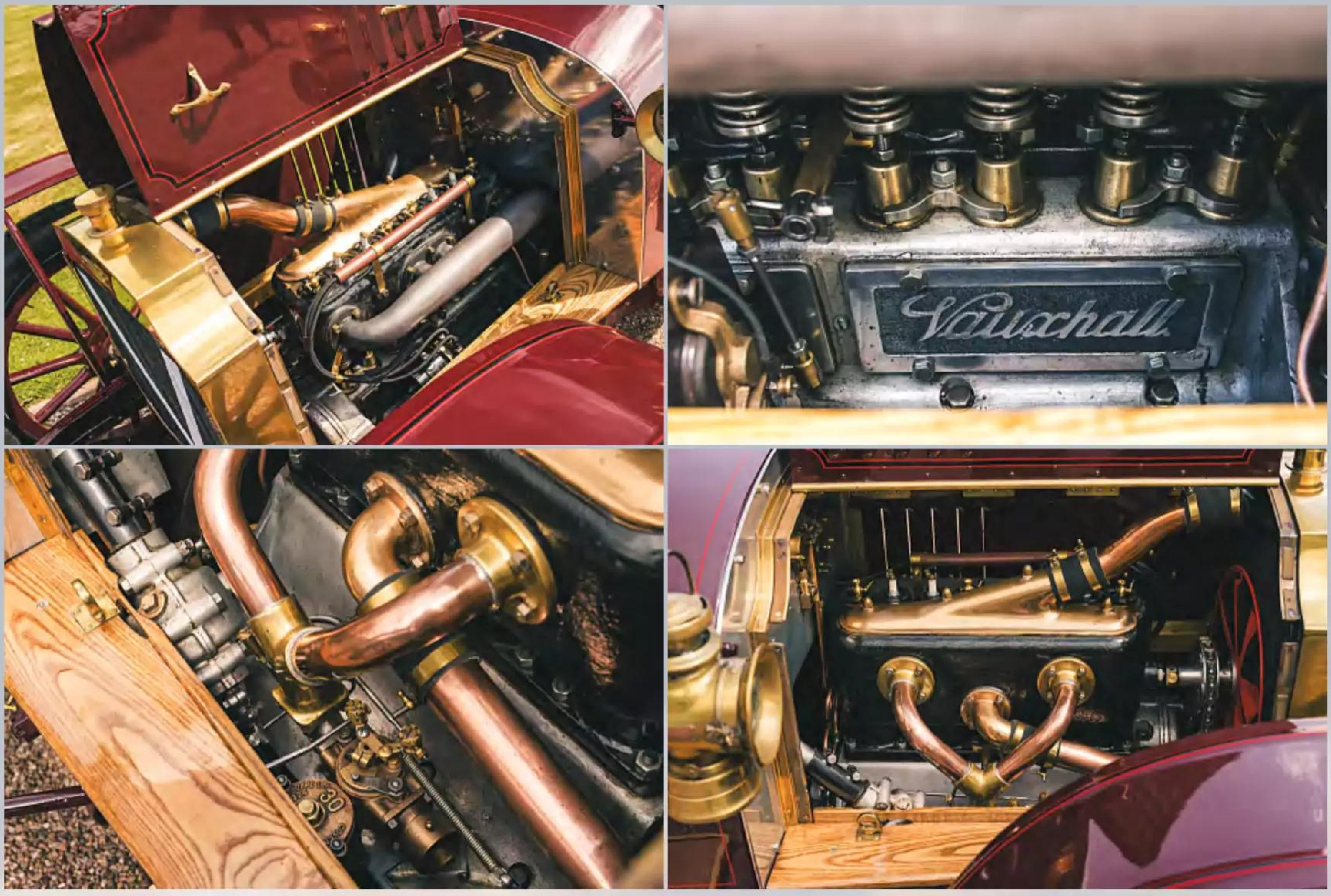
Vauxhall's competition ambitions forged the template for the A-type that became the bedrock of its early sales success

WORDS **SIMON HUCKNALL** PHOTOGRAPHY **JACK HARRISON**

The first use of 'sports car' is often credited to Vauxhall's C10 Prince Henry, but in many ways the term would be better applied to this, the earlier 20hp A-type. Disarmingly handsome, low-slung and rakish in Two Seat Semi-racer guise, as here, it was a genuine race replica, inspired by Vauxhall's entry for the 1908 International Touring Car Trial. MD Percy Kidner's outstanding performance at that event in a works Y-type was to prove transformative for the Luton manufacturer. It heralded a long period of competition success for Vauxhall, and cemented the marque as a maker of some of the best-engineered and most durable cars in the business.

We'll return to 'our' car – a 1910 A090 export model, which brings a further strand to Vauxhall's racing history – shortly, but its conception started prior even to the formal existence of the manufacturer. Following Vauxhall's move from south London, where it had been making cars since 1903, to Luton two years later, the mainstay of production had been the 12-16hp, which by 1906 was its sole offering. This model's success prompted the car-making division to split from The Vauxhall and West Hydraulic Engineering Company,

VAUXHALL
WC-1373



Clockwise from top left: short exhaust manifold leads through bulkhead; A-type engine was an all-new design by Hodges and Pomeroy; copper piping feeds 3054cc 'four'; the carburettor-control mechanisms were recreated using CAD modelling

> *'Commercially, the 20hp was an unequivocal success, advancing production volume and permitting a larger range of variants'*

The A-type's body control remains at the 'work in progress' stage, but driving it is an immersive and engaging experience

whose core business was still producing pumps and steamboat engines. In 1907, Percy Kidner – already a Vauxhall stalwart – and his friend Leslie Walton formed Vauxhall Motors Limited, operating from a different part of the Kimpton Road factory (VML's original offices remain, in the wake of the marque's recent departure from the town). With Kidner appointed MD and Walton as new company chairman, FW Hodges was brought in as consulting engineer and one Laurence H Pomeroy as his assistant.

Motorsport became the focus of the fledgling company. Few other disciplines demonstrated a car's performance and durability so effectively to a still-sceptical audience, and in the first few years of the new century, a plethora of trials and hillclimbs had been established in Britain for manufacturers to showcase their wares. Hodges vastly improved the 12-16's reliability by designing a closed, recirculating oil system that delivered a pressurised feed through a hollow crankshaft to the big-end journals. As well as doing away with the need to manually replenish an oiler, it gave Vauxhall licence to market the model as 'The No Smoke Car'. But, with its inefficient T-head and separate block castings, the four-cylinder engine was far from state-of-the-art, and while its output gradually increased from 23bhp to 27bhp during its life, this was never a powerhouse: a disappointing eighth-in-class (out of 14) finish in 1907's high-profile Scottish Reliability Trial said it all.

That was all to change the following year, when Kidner tasked Hodges and Pomeroy with developing a new engine for the 1908 International Touring Car Trial, which comprised the RAC 2000-Mile and Scottish Reliability Trials. The experimental Y-type was the result, the 20hp engine of which was a clean-sheet design, signed off by Hodges but with the detail work carried out by Pomeroy. Retaining the 12-16 unit's bore but increasing its stroke by an inch boosted displacement to 3139cc, and all cylinders were now formed in one casting with a new, Pomeroy-designed L-head. The 12-16's pressure-fed lubrication system was carried over, as was its Bosch-supplied magneto ignition, and the three-speed gearbox was modified to accept another ratio. The same went for the chassis, which in effect mirrored the design of the 12-16's, although the Y-type's brakes were upgraded to cope with the additional performance.

What Kidner achieved in the trial – described in a contemporary report as 'The most notoriously fine performance in the severest motor competition ever held in this Kingdom' – turned around Vauxhall's fortunes. The Y-type acquitted itself faultlessly, with Kidner awarded a Gold Medal for the Scottish event and a Silver Cup for the 2000-Mile Trial. The pressure was then on for Vauxhall to capitalise on this success, and by the following month it had announced an all-new 20hp model closely based on the trial car. Internally known as the A09 (representing the year it was launched), but marketed as the 20hp, if anything its specification improved upon that of the competition Y-type. The engine capacity took a slight dip to 3054cc, but a new four-speed 'box had a top ratio returning a respectable 24.5mph per 1000rpm. As before, a metal cone clutch was used, running in oil, and the Y-type's 30mm White & Poppe carburettor was also carried over. One change made versus the racer was the Bosch magneto ignition's move to fixed timing, removing the need for a manually operated advance/retard lever on the steering wheel. Vauxhall boasted it made the dashboard 'free from the usual medley of apparatus', but the system proved unreliable and the manual lever swiftly returned. The 20hp's chassis – available with either a 9ft 7in or a 10ft 3in wheelbase, the latter better for formal, closed bodywork – was strengthened, with the side members swept outwards by 3in around the dash. The brakes were operated via a foot pedal on the transmission and through an external hand lever to the rear 12in drums.

Commercially, the 20hp was an unequivocal success, which advanced production volume (134 chassis were sold by the end of 1909, more than 1000 by 1915) and permitted a larger range of model variants. While a bare chassis could be bought for £420 and sent to a coachbuilder of the buyer's choice, the company was also able to offer its own Standard Rotund Body (£465), Single Landaulette (£550) and Three-quarter Landaulette (£575). It was clearly a recipe that the firm did not see fit to change much, with minimal revisions made to its specification before production ceased in 1915. Visually, a new, more rounded Vauxhall badge appeared late in 1910, but otherwise the improvements could be felt more than seen, with a steady lift in the 3-litre engine's actual output from 32bhp to nearly 40bhp for the later cars, this gain attributed to lighter and stronger internal componentry, and 'better tuning'.

Our featured car's additional zero in its A090 designation merely denotes that its chassis was built for the 1910 model year – although attempting to make sense out of much of Vauxhall's nomenclature is a fool's game. Manufactured on 20 September 1910, it is chassis number 229 and was originally shipped

VAUXHALL 20HP (A-TYPE)

Sold/number built 1908-'15/c1000
Construction pressed-steel chassis, aluminium body over ash frame
Engine all-iron, sidevalve 3054cc 'four', single White & Poppe carburettor
Max power 40bhp **Max torque** n/a
Transmission four-speed manual, RWD
Suspension semi-elliptic leaf springs f/r
Steering worm and segment
Brakes hand-operated 12in (305mm) rear drums; foot-pedal transmission brake
Length 13ft 1in (3990mm)
Width 5ft 6in (1680mm)
Height n/a **Wheelbase** 9ft 7in (2921mm)
Weight n/a **0-60mph** n/a
Top speed 60mph (est) **Mpg** 25
Price new £420 (chassis only)
Price now £100,000

Clockwise: chairs are accommodating; wooden wheels are largely original; fluted grille would become a Vauxhall signature

VAUXHALL
VAUXHALL

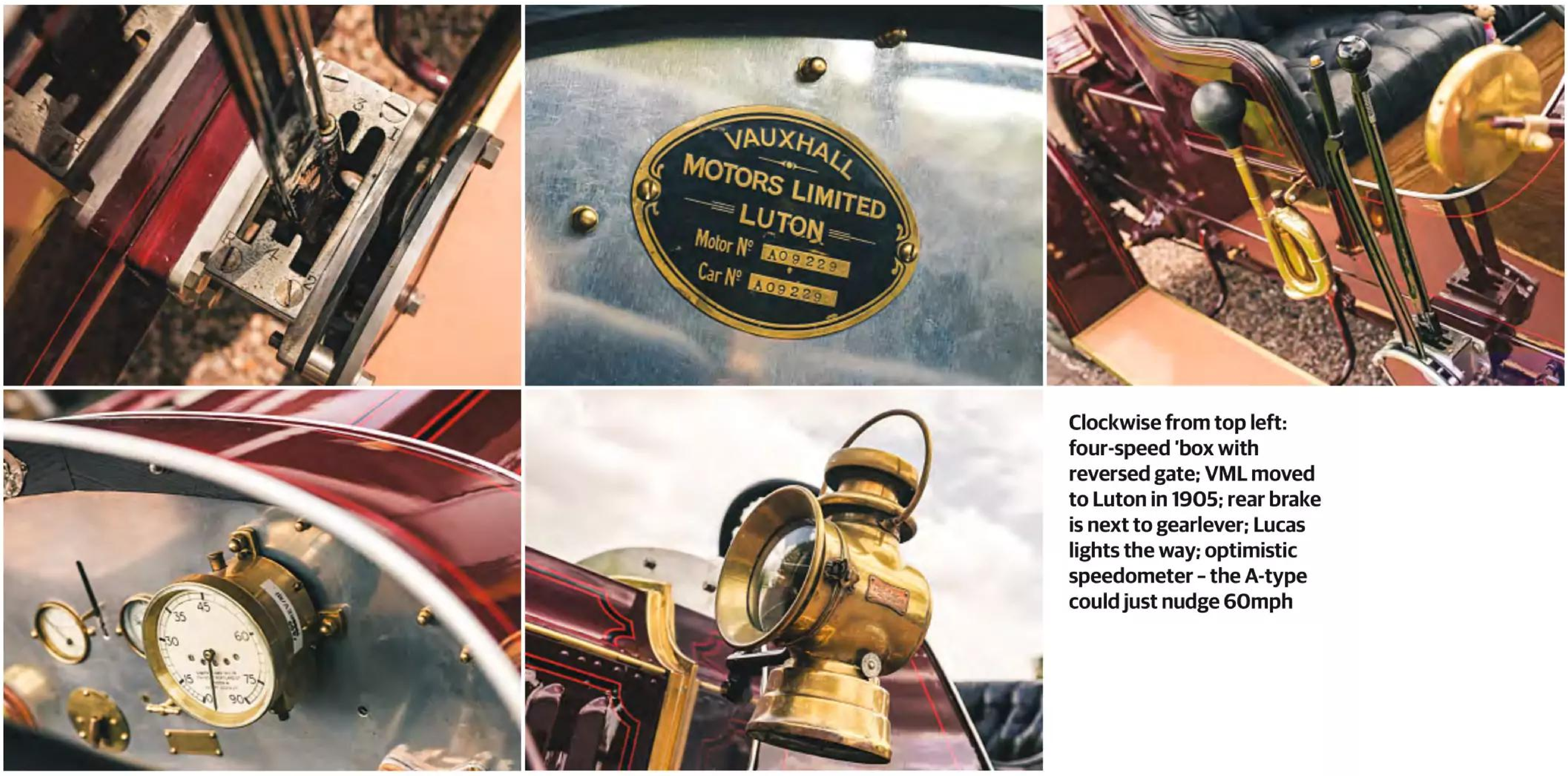
to New Zealand, where Vauxhall's importer, Walter Scott, managed sales for the country. Like Kidner, Hodges and Pomeroy, Scott saw motorsport as a key promotional tool. Inspired by Kidner's trial success in 1908, he ordered the one other, near-identical Y-type that had been built by the factory as a sister car to Kidner's machine. When it arrived with Scott late in 1908, he wasted no time putting it to work, as described by Vauxhall authority Nic Portway in his book, *Vauxhall Cars 1903-1918*: 'First came the AA Canterbury four-day trial at Christmas 1908, with the Y-type in exactly the same state as Kidner's trial car. Against 36 other entries the Vauxhall won a gold medal for a non-stop run, the fastest time in the hillclimb, a certificate for highest marks for reliability and the hillclimb award on formula!'

Scott's dominance with 'Y2' in New Zealand's burgeoning motor-racing scene became legendary. Over the following four years, he took regular victories in 'Old Blue' (as Y2 was known) in hillclimbs, reliability trials and sand racing across the country. Scott kept in regular correspondence with the Luton factory, and as Vauxhall's own 20hp works racers evolved, he was able to make similar improvements to Old Blue. By 1911-'12, this had resulted in the car being timed at an impressive 68mph on South Island's Brighton Beach. Only at the end of 1912 did Scott swap from Old Blue into one of Vauxhall's Coupe de l'Auto racers, selling Y2 the following year. In new ownership it continued to be campaigned in local trials and hillclimbs, and it survives to this day.

Alex Hayward has owned A090, chassis 229, for 14 years. Not much is known of its early history, but around 50 years ago it was discovered by Kiwi Vauxhall experts Jack Newell (who coincidentally restored and now owns Old Blue) and Gordon Jelfs. The car was being used as a motorised cart at a farm near Christchurch, and due to its poor condition it was touch and go whether it was salvageable. However, British Vauxhall restorer Alisdaire Lockhart partly took on the challenge in the 1990s, returning the car to the UK and – as Alex explains – "got it back on to its wheels". By the time Alex acquired the Vauxhall there was still much work to be done, but with the chassis complete and restorable, along with around 85% of the original engine and drivetrain, the project was deemed viable. The A-type's 1910 body was long gone, so Western Coachworks in Derby was commissioned to create an aluminium-over-ash replacement that closely mirrored the Two Seat Semi-racer design it would have worn when new. Alex's son, Orlando, was embarking on a career in classic car restoration and became his father's partner in crime. They secured the Vauxhall factory's engineering sketches for the A-type from marque expert Julian Ghosh, and digitised them before creating CAD models for missing componentry to be remanufactured. A great example is the control mechanisms for the White & Poppe carb, their faithful recreation testament to Alex and Orlando's painstaking attention to the car's authenticity.

Sitting proudly on its largely original, wooden-spoked wheels, each of which displays a hand-engraved 'Vauxhall' on its centre cap, this sports-bodied racer is quite something to behold. In tribute to Walter Scott's Old Blue, Alex has duplicated the Kiwi racer's signature white 'V' on the car's bluff radiator matrix – a fitting touch. The body's pared-back design has an overtly athletic look about it, with the bonnet's scalloped 'flutes' (an early example of what would become a perennial Vauxhall trademark, right through to the post-war era) reinforcing this. The body appears set low on its chassis, but as a driver you tower above the scuttle, with most of your torso right in the airstream. But who cares? This is one drive I wouldn't miss for the world.

To fire the 20hp's sidevalve 'four', you first prime each cylinder with a smidgen of fuel before cranking the motor over once, switching on the magneto and then cranking once more for it to start instantly, the engine settling to a fast idle. Mechanically, it sounds as if it has



Clockwise from top left: four-speed 'box with reversed gate; VML moved to Luton in 1905; rear brake is next to gearlever; Lucas lights the way; optimistic speedometer – the A-type could just nudge 60mph

> *'The brake pedal provides only passable retardation, but overall this is a gloriously characterful car to pilot'*

just rolled off Vauxhall's Kimpton Road line, running smoothly and evenly, its exhaust emitting a cultured burble – and, as claimed, producing very little smoke. The throttle is a mere button positioned between the clutch and right-hand brake pedals, and needs a firm press to get off the line (Alex says some fine-tuning of the carb is still required). Like almost all veteran and vintage Vauxhalls, the external gearshift, with its exposed gate, operates through a reversed H-pattern, with first to your right and forward. Take up is relatively painless for a cone clutch, and the torquey 'four' soon has you up to speed, provided you take your time with double-declutching between gears. The steering, via a large, thick-rimmed wheel, is relatively high-geared and quick to respond off-centre, with surprisingly little play. Sitting at around 45mph the car feels omnipotent, as if it could trundle along these rural Shropshire roads all day. With no dampers fitted, body movements can occasionally be wayward if you encounter awkward cambers or sharp undulations, but Alex believes that this can be improved with tweaks to the largely original semi-elliptic springs. Using the brake pedal provides only passable retardation (Vauxhall stoppers had a lousy reputation for years), so my right hand is never far from the external lever on the approach to junctions. But overall, it is a glorious and characterful car to pilot.

This 20hp A-type Vauxhall would have been very much the king of the road in 1910; that it was one of the first motor cars to benefit from Laurence Pomeroy's immense talent makes it even more special today. It was also the genesis of a series of pivotal models – Prince Henry, 30-98 and D-type – that took Vauxhall from small-time player to the top of General Motors' shopping list when it acquired the car maker in 1925. For that, the modern-day marque should be eternally grateful.

Thanks to *Alex and Orlando Hayward; Nic Portway; David Kirke at the Veteran & Vintage Vauxhall Register (vauxhallregister.com)*

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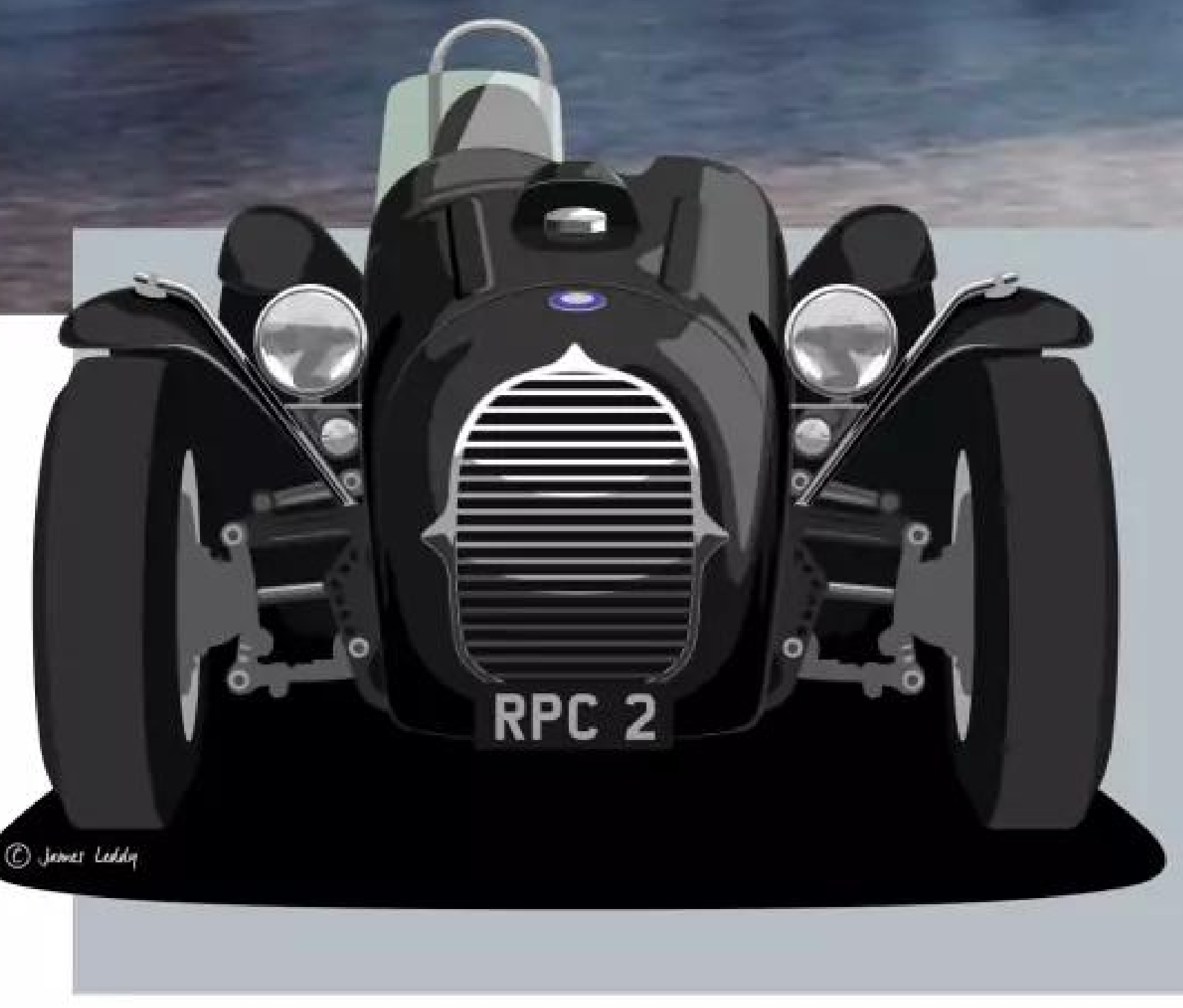


HWM-CHEVROLET

RUN BY Simon Taylor
OWNED SINCE July 2000
PREVIOUS REPORT Jan '25

LOTS OF FUN AND FRIENDS IN NEED

It has been a hectic season for the Stovebolt Special: 11 hillclimb weekends, two hillclimb schools, and 3000 rapid road miles getting to and from them. And one serious breakage. That was sorted in time for the following event, thanks to some superb craftsmanship by my sainted mate Colin Mullan.

The car and I have become very fond of Gurston Down, the rather scary course in a fold of the chalk downs beyond Salisbury. We did five events there plus, to sweep out the pre-season cobwebs, one of its excellent hillclimb schools. It starts downhill, with a precipitous plunge into the valley to a very treacherous fast left. Getting this right is key, and the Stovebolt is doing more than 90mph when I get there. I have learned to steel myself not to brake, but I'm not brave enough to do it without a brief confidence lift.

Then it's steeply up through a banked hairpin, an abrupt brow, a tight left and a blast up the finish straight – which is actually a curve and needs courage to take flat in my 75-year-old car with nearly 400bhp. I don't always manage it.

Last season my best time on this hill was 41.2 secs. My goal this year was to do a 39. I managed it in July, but at the August weekend I had a stern talk to myself and then, from nowhere, came a 38.83. I felt as if I had won a Grand Prix.

I also had two great weekends at Wiscombe Park in Devon, a beautiful place where part of the track winds through a wooded section lined with bluebells and rhododendron bushes. After a shower the endless bends under the trees never seem to dry out. Then there is a tight hairpin and a straight blast up to nearly 100mph, followed by an even tighter hairpin. I always arrive at the top paddock shaking with adrenalin and relief that I've got there. I failed in my goal to break 50 secs, so more work to do next year.

The other climbs were at my beloved Shelsley Walsh, which is where the breakage happened. During practice for July's Classic Nostalgia meeting, as I changed into second after leaving the line, a fearful clattering told me the left outer driveshaft UJ had shattered.

If you break your car when you have driven it there on the road, how do you get home? RAC rescue won't collect from a competing event, so the usual ploy is to push it out of the paddock and down the road as far as you can before phoning to say you've broken down, er, just as you happened to be passing a hillclimb.

But hillclimbers are a brilliantly friendly bunch. Ever-cheerful northerner Haydn Spedding has been campaigning his full-race E-type very rapidly for 40 years, and his two sons, Richard and Rob, are also successful climbers. He offered to forego his remaining practice runs, get the Stovebolt on to the E-type's big trailer, hitch it up to his Range Rover, drive us 130 miles to London, then rush back to Shelsley for his Sunday's sport. I was rendered speechless: it was a wonderfully generous gesture.

In Colin's workshop we surveyed the damage. Flailing around, the shaft had smashed the adjacent shock absorber and dented the fuel tank, but it didn't appear to be leaking. However, the top of the forged-steel yoke, which like a lot of the HWM is of unknown ancestry, had snapped off. Colin painstakingly built up the broken area with TiG weld and then machined it back to its original shape. He wisely replaced all four UJs, and the car was back together

A very good deed: Haydn Spedding plus trailer got the Stovebolt home

The quickest way to get the Stovebolt off the line requires some wheelspin, but not too much. Throttle control is all

CHRIS MARTIN

From top: the broken driveshaft yoke before Colin's repair; smashed damper

in time to set off for my next meeting at Gurston Down. Haydn's generosity and Colin's superb skill had got us back on track.

Now the Stovebolt is with Sean McClurg for its usual winter fettle, which includes a partial respray to lose some of the scars from years of hard road use. I'm spending the dark evenings pondering where I can find another couple of seconds up Wiscombe, and how to take the top curve at Gurston flat.

Left-right: Falken Wildpeaks are a good compromise; low range helps in the rough stuff

SUBARU FORESTER SPORT

RUN BY Charlie Calderwood
OWNED SINCE March 2025
PREVIOUS REPORT June 2025

My Subaru plans haven't quite worked out this year. One of the main reasons I bought the car was to do an autumn European road trip with a couple of mates – a one-car 'banger rally' sort of adventure. Life got in the way, though the ambition remains, now for spring 2026.

That's given me time to get the car up to scratch, although the Forester was so well looked after by its previous owner that it has provided stellar service straight off the auction block. It has taken the load off my MR2 and drawn instant admiration from our photographers in particular – a fair number of *C&SC* features have been shot from its boot. It is not using any oil to speak of, and the only problem I've discovered so far is an immobiliser remote that chews through batteries – fortunately there is a back-up keypad inside the car.

I bought it knowing that one of the rear tyres was flagged as an advisory on its previous MoT, so almost as soon as I got the car I ordered two new Falken Wildpeak all-terrains to match the decent pair on the front axle. They're not full-on mud tyres, but are visibly more aggressive than a standard summer or all-season rubber, which is the best compromise for a car that will go off-road, but spends 95% of its time on Tarmac.

They are not without their limitations – the back end of the Subaru steps out earlier than expected when the weight comes off the rear axle on a roundabout. I'd love to say it's entertaining, but, as a first-time SUV driver, the experience is a bit unnerving when combined with such soft springs. I'm sure I'll get used to it.

The reward was in exploring the local green lanes during the summer. Most of the good ones in my area close for six months of the year, so they are never that chewed up, which is crucial for the Scoob because heavily rutted stuff will test the limits of its ground clearance. I've never struggled for traction, though, and the low-range gearbox is particularly helpful given the car's manual gearbox, allowing me to crawl along at idle rather than slip the clutch constantly.

It's a new way of enjoying old cars for me, enabled by just an Ordnance Survey map daubed with highlighter pen, and has given me the taste for more – Hertfordshire has its limitations in terms of scenery. My partner Laura, as much a fan of nature as an Australian who finds the British weather disagreeable, has also taken to it, which makes finding the time easier.

I've still got a big timing-belt service on the horizon, which is going to be a wallet-drainer, but so far my 135,000-mile Forester is doing pretty well for £1600.

MEET THE FLEET

AARON McKAY *(Deputy editor)*
1972 Volkswagen Type 2 Dormobile
1985 BMW 325i
2005 Fiat Panda 4x4

ALASTAIR CLEMENTS *(Editor in chief)*
1957 MG Magnette ZB
1983 Suzuki Cervo CX-G
2006 MINI Cooper Convertible

CHARLIE CALDERWOOD *(Features editor)*
1992 Toyota MR2 Mk2
2002 Subaru Forester Sport

DAMON COGMAN *(Art editor)*
1968 Volkswagen Type 3 Fastback
1982 Saab 99 GL
2005 BMW Z4 2.2i

GAYNOR CAUTER *(Contributor)*
1965 Jaguar E-type S1 4.2 OTS

GRAEME HURST *(Contributor)*
1957 Austin-Healey 100/6
1958 Jaguar XK150 OTS
1966 Ford Mustang GT
1970 Citroën ID21 Safari
1979 Porsche 911SC
1982 Mercedes-Benz 280TE
1986 BMW 745i

JAMES PAGE *(Contributor)*
1931 Austin Seven saloon
1970 MG 1300

JON PRESSNELL *(Senior contributor)*
c1933 Austin Seven Special
1964 MG Midget
1974 Rover 3500S
1987 Renault 4 Savane

JULIAN BALME *(Senior contributor)*
1932 Ford Roadster
1940 Lincoln-Zephyr Continental
1954 Lincoln Cosmopolitan
1957 Ford Ranch Wagon
1962 Triumph TR4
1964 Ford Falcon Sprint
1964 Ford Galaxie 500
1967 Triumph Spitfire MkIII
1970 Lotus Elan +2

LIZZIE POPE *(Associate editor)*
1965 Ford Mustang

MALCOLM McKAY *(Contributor)*
1959 Rochdale GT
1961 Morris 1000 Traveller
1967 Jaguar E-type S1 4.2 2+2
1969 Marcos 3-Litre
1973 Jaguar XJ6 S2 4.2
1973 Volkswagen Brasília

MARTIN BUCKLEY *(Senior contributor)*
1960 Rolls-Royce Silver Cloud II
1962 Chevrolet Corvair 700
1966 Oldsmobile Toronado
1970 Lancia Flaminia Berlina
1970 Renault 16 TS
1972 NSU Ro80
1974 Fiat 130 Coupé
1978 Lancia Gamma Berlina
1981 Range Rover

MARTIN PORT *(Contributor)*
1934 Austin Seven Special
1958 Land-Rover Series One 88in
1959 Land-Rover Series II 88in

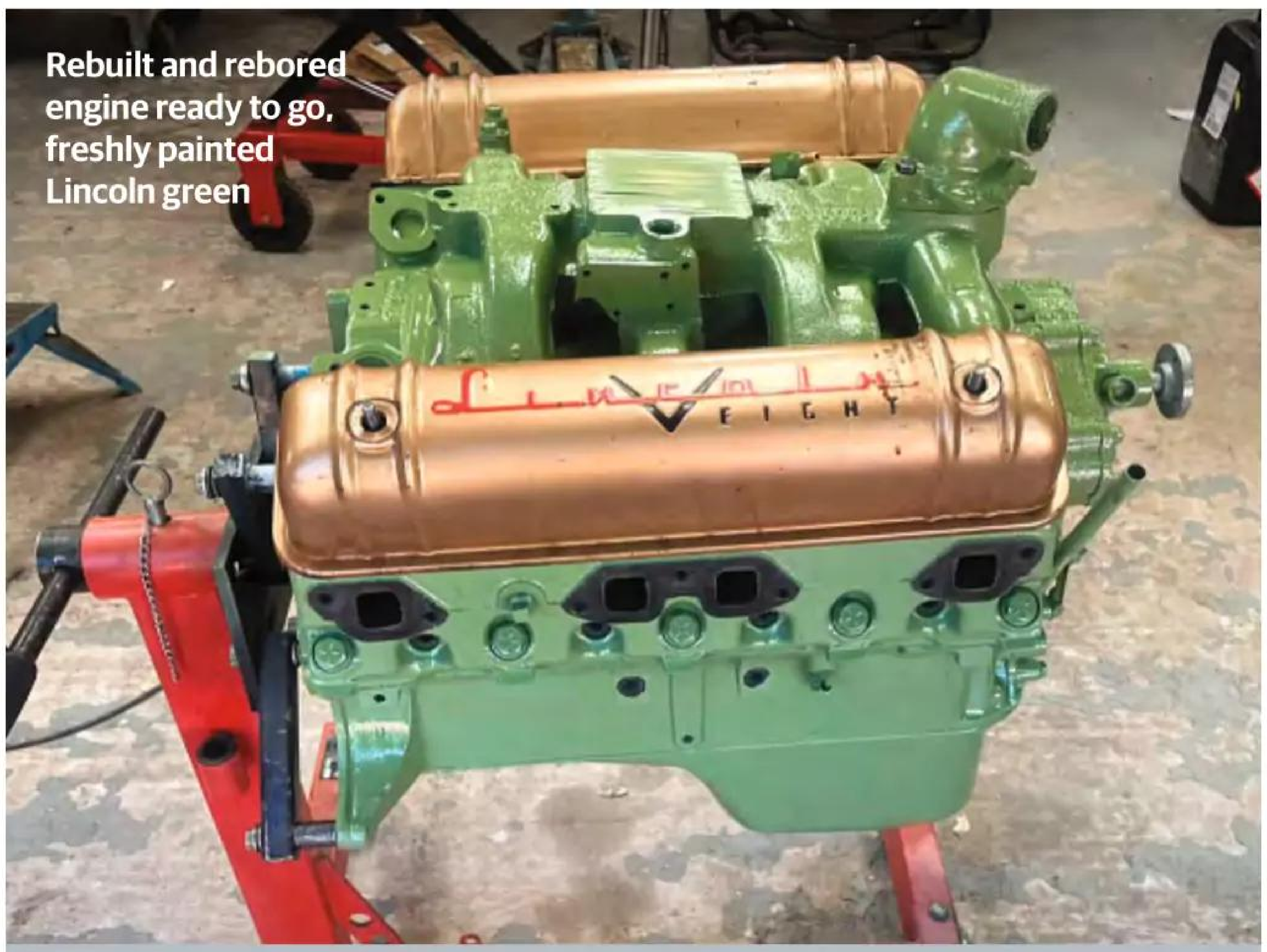
MICK WALSH *(International editor)*
1949 Lea-Francis 14hp Sports
1967 Alfa Romeo Duetto

PAUL HARDIMAN *(Senior contributor)*
1972 Ford Escort Mk1

RYAN STANDEN *(Editorial assistant)*
1976 Reliant Scimitar GTE

SIMON HUCKNALL *(Senior contributor)*
1977 Fiat 128 1300 CL
2009 Mazda MX-5 2.0i

SIMON TAYLOR *(Editor at large)*
1937 Bentley Gurney Nutting Sedanca
1950/'56 HWM-Chevrolet
1961 AC Ace 2.6
1969 Chevrolet Corvette



Rebuilt and rebored engine ready to go, freshly painted Lincoln green

Highlighting some of the hairline cracks on rare exhaust manifold

LINCOLN COSMOPOLITAN

RUN BY Julian Balme
OWNED SINCE 1991
PREVIOUS REPORT December 2024

He's home. After nearly two years since losing the water pump in France, the Lincoln is on the road and purring like a kitten. In my previous report, I congratulated myself for squirrelling away (for more than 20 years) another 317cu in engine, and explained how Ted Booth was going to rob bits from it to rebuild the original. At least, that's what we thought.

Following delivery to Hamlins Engineering in Bridgwater, it was deemed that the cylinder heads on the spare unit were really badly water-damaged, with corrosion all around the valve seats, and in the end only one was considered usable after extensive work.

Although the crank and rods were okay, we did step up with a new set of plus-60-thou pistons. With the block already at plus 40, this was the biggest recommended overbore possible. Consequently, they had to be specially made by Egge Pistons in California, which also supplied main, big-end and camshaft bearing kits. I arranged for the harmonic balancer to be reconditioned, too. We lost it on our 1998 trip from Connecticut to California and had to have it hastily repaired, so it hasn't done too badly for surviving.

The cast-iron manifolds bore signs of external cracking, but none had gone the whole way through. These one-year-only items aren't the most efficient, but if anyone out there has a set, I'd be interested in adding them to my spares shelf. We also elected to replace the ignition points and condenser with a Pertronix set-up.

During the works, everything was cleaned (a combination of blasting and dipping) and then repainted in Lincoln green. All went to plan, except for the rear main oil seal, which, irritatingly, spun on initial fire-up, allowing oil to escape. These are made of rope, so everything had to come out again to re-seat it.

Going through the rest of the car, Ted serviced the Hydramatic gearbox, replacing a number of worn-out parts such as the throttle-valve shaft and oil pump, as well as renewing some seals and gaskets. He also changed a front balljoint, a UJ and a rear-axle seal.

With all this work behind us, the maiden drive from Ted's place in the Forest of Dean home to Devon was uneventful. Although limited to 3000rpm for the first 500 miles, the Lincoln was still able to keep up with modern traffic, a quality of the 70-year-old car that never fails to impress all involved. Next up is the replacement of the front tyres – a chore and an expense I was considering two years ago on the way home from France.

From far left: bent anti-roll bar mount; repaired and reinforced; E30 comparison confirmed suspicions

BMW 325i

RUN BY Aaron McKay
OWNED SINCE June 2022
PREVIOUS REPORT Nov '25

Twice, in quick succession, the usually reliable BMW has been rendered immobile, although I'll take some of the blame. First, it was a disturbing creak from the front axle as we departed a steep junction that revealed my anti-roll bar mounts to be twisted almost 45° clear of the chassis. I had just fitted new bushes and drop-links, where I'd noticed the poor location that relied on a small tab under the larger of two bolts. The belated fix was a much larger tab around the forward bolt, along with necessary repairs to the subframe.

Then, a quick coolant change turned into a nightmare with the lack of an 8mm spanner to release the bleed-screw on the thermostat. When I unthinkingly whipped off the fuel-pressure regulator for ratchet access, I got a face-full of petrol at 3bar. Then, I broke the O-ring trying to force it back on. Days later, a new one arrived and went on with astonishing ease. By that time, I'd bought an 8mm spanner – and found my old one.

Looking for some easy wins, I gave the interior and underside a clean, taking off sunscreen and road dirt in good measure. Some Waxoyl in the wheelarches made me feel better as autumn set in.

Then, I met up with *Autocar* colleague Illya Verpraet, who has just bought himself a 325i Touring. A later car, it's also to M-tech spec, with limited-slip diff, H&R springs and Bilstein B6 dampers. We were both keen to compare. My variable steering rack is noticeably slower, yet sharper, and I confirmed that my brake pedal is spongy even by E30 standards. The ride on Illya's was a bit busy, but now I wonder if my dampers are tired. And I'm glad of my rowdy exhaust – the standard one is surprisingly muted.

The Series II makes an appropriate-looking support tender at Pendine

LAND-ROVER SERIES II

RUN BY Martin Port
OWNED SINCE March 2016
PREVIOUS REPORT Sept 2025

July's trip to the Le Mans Classic was always going to be a highlight of my motoring year. Not only did my bed creation work admirably, but the Land-Rover performed as I'd hoped, addressing my post-engine-rebuild lack of faith in the best-possible fashion.

That's not to say that running a 66-year-old vehicle as a daily driver is ever free from problems. A leaky rear hub required a new felt seal and gasket, and some rather oily brake shoes needed obvious attention on the other end of the axle. A brittle insulator on the Lucas FW2 wiper-motor body then all but disintegrated and was shorting out – another easy fix, even if the replacement part wasn't particularly cheap given its small size. Then a short-term swap of wheels and tyres highlighted another problem, when one of the wheel studs pulled straight out of the hub. These studs are threaded into the hub and then peened at the rear, and although I could have changed the stud to a pull-through version, an OEM replacement did the job just fine.

In addition to taking the Land-Rover to a few local shows, I also decided to attend a 'Tea on the Tailgate' meet. This simple idea was started more than a year ago and has since spread across the UK and Europe. The aim is pretty straightforward: turn up (preferably in a Land-Rover), make a brew, have a chat and then go home again. No politics, and no snobbery. As a result, I ended up going to five over the summer – all in different locations and organised by different areas – including one in Hampshire that we used as an excuse for an end-of-holidays camping trip.

Despite an abysmal forecast as what felt like months of dry weather came to an end, son Dylan and I loaded a tent (for him – I would be sleeping in the Series II once again) and various paraffin-fuelled cooking and lighting options into the Land-Rover, and headed for the South Downs.

Although we drove through torrential rain, the rest of our excursion was largely dry – but the same couldn't be said about our following adventure three weeks later, as we once again loaded up the Series II. This time we were heading west, with our destination Pendine Sands for the annual Hot Rod Races hosted by the Vintage Hot Rod Association. I'd considered taking the Series II last year, but was put off by the 7mpg I was then 'enjoying'. With that issue now sorted, I figured there were worse things to do than sleep in the back of a Land-Rover on a remote Welsh hillside and, five hours after setting off, that's exactly what I was doing.

That sleep was a little fitful: I had repeatedly smelt warm oil on the way along the M4, so had pulled over to check all was well. It wasn't. The rocker-cover gasket had been breached at the front end, and the pooling oil was then being blown back around the engine bay by the fan – hardly the best start to the weekend.

Although we'd set off in 23°C heat, it began to rain as soon as we hit Wales proper. By the time we were pitching Dylan's tent and I was setting up my Solihull *boudoir*, it was hammering down – and that was how it continued for the following 36 hours.

It was so wet that, even with the tide out, it was impossible to see where the beach ended and the sea began. As a result, none of the racers left the paddock on Saturday – even the Series II needed a push to get out after it had sunk in the saturated sand.

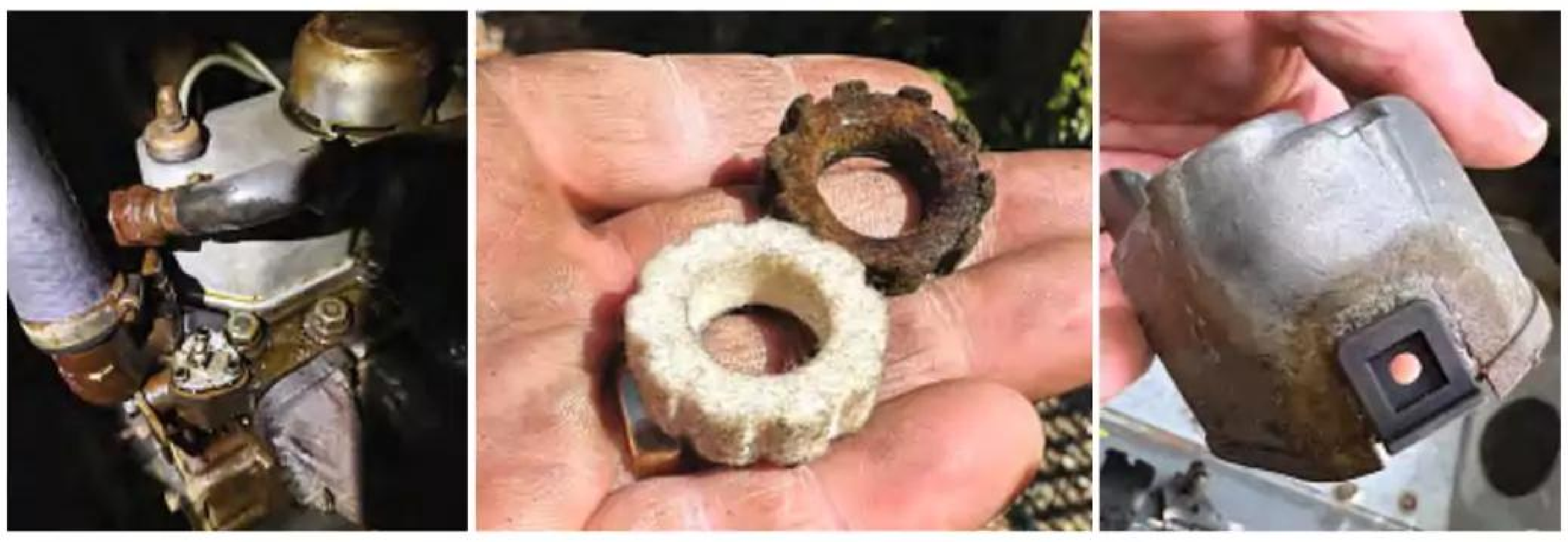
That evening – in the pouring rain – Jake Shoolheifer lent both a hand and a tube of gasket sealant, and we managed to stem the oil flow before heading out to a remote pizza restaurant. Perhaps it was the rain or sand ingress, but when we all left to return to our respective campsites, I no longer had a working speedometer!

Fortunately, Sunday dawned a different story and while the assembled hot rods got a couple of runs along the hallowed sands, the Land-Rover slowly dried out before we made our way home, occupants happy that we were once again able to experience this unique event from the inside.

We spent nine and a half hours on the road and covered 400 miles over the weekend – the equivalent of going to Le Mans and back – and even among the superb machines on the beach, the Series II drew many favourable comments.

I have a new to-do list as a result of the trip, but how can you be mad when your classic still proves to be so eminently usable?

Despite the weather, spirits weren't dampened for hardy campers


Left-right: gasket leak; new felt hub seal replaced tired old one; pricey wiper insulator

Trip to the Big Smoke resulted in a failure to proceed, temporarily fixed by the RAC's finest

Handmade bronze bushing for the gear linkage should resolve selection issues

LANCIA GAMMA BERLINA

RUN BY Martin Buckley
OWNED SINCE May 2019
PREVIOUS REPORT April 2025

I chose the warmest Saturday in July to drive the Gamma Berlina to London, the idea being that I was going to hand the car over to Mark Devaney of 24 Hundred: The Dino Workshop at the monthly Club 96 meeting in Belgravia the following morning, in order to get a few jobs sorted. The Lancia had alternative plans, however.

Engine-wise it ran faultlessly, with no overheating issues. This part of London appeared eerily quiet, with even parking spaces in evidence, and friendly natives engaged me in conversations about the Gamma. It has almost imperceptibly progressed from being a vehicle that would get about as much positive attention as a skip, to being an object of wonder and elegance.

Problems only arose while parking in Chelsea: on selecting reverse, I suddenly got the feeling that the linkage was no longer attached to the gearlever. In other words, I was stuck in reverse with five neutral forward gears. I have experienced pretty much every other Gamma 'issue' (and there are a fair few), but this is a new one even for me. According to Charles Shelton of the Lancia Gamma Consortium, this is happening more often as the cars approach 50 years old. "That linkage failure is quite common these days," he says. "It is usually caused by the rubber 'cotton reels', which give a degree of shock absorption in the linkage, becoming detached from the metal backplates that they are bonded to."

In truth, the linkage has been giving indications that it is not entirely happy for a while now, in the form of a sloppy feel and more free movement than before.

The RAC man appeared fairly promptly and reattached the linkage, but issued dire warnings about using the Lancia without investigating the cause of the problem. The trouble was that I couldn't just drive straight back home: I had a bed waiting for me in Teddington. I didn't know it at the time, but this was to be the last occasion I would see my best friend, the late and much-missed Nick Kisch. As usual, he put me up for the night, the plan being that I would drive the Gamma into town the following morning. Once again, the car had other ideas.

I got up early and stopped in Teddington high street to take out some cash, but selecting reverse appeared to trigger the collapse of the linkage and once again I was marooned with no forward gears. Somehow, I managed not to get a parking ticket while I spent the morning waiting for the RAC driver, who happily recovered the car to Mark in Tunbridge Wells rather than attempting to effect another temporary repair.

On a positive note, Mark reports that the Lancia is very sound and he is now moving forward with sorting a few bodywork issues and replacing the coolant hoses, as supplied by the Gamma Consortium. He has made some new bushes in brass for the gear linkage, and Theo Kyriacou at the Consortium has, amazingly, found me two new rear dampers: one of the struts on the car was rusted through, and it seemed wise to change the pair. Thanks to John Antonaki, who lives just up the road from Theo in North London, for collecting the struts for me.

Above: rotten rear suspension strut was overdue replacement. Left: in fine company with a Ghibli at 24 Hundred

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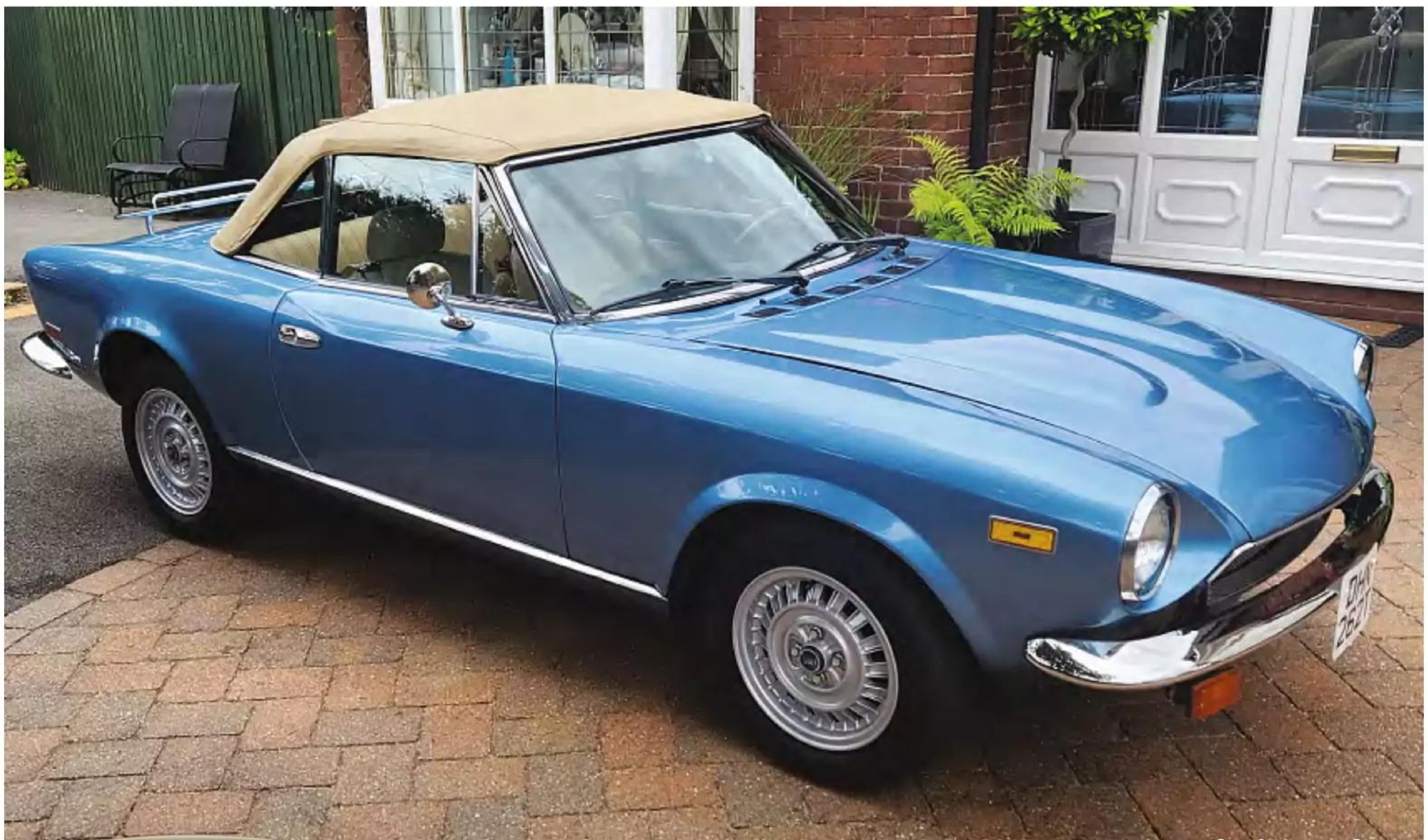
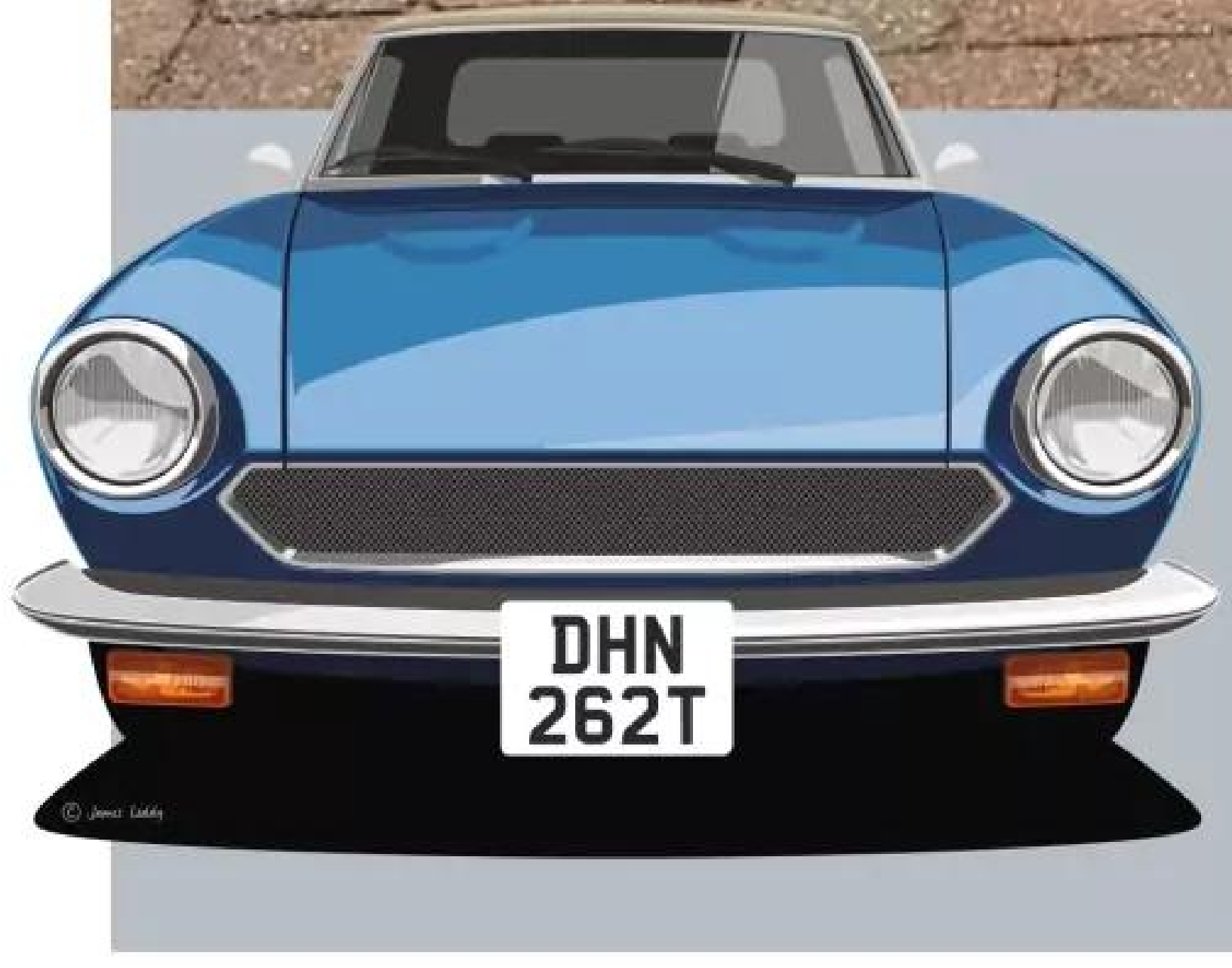


Perfectly imperfect Fiat 124 Spider is in great mechanical condition, but some minor cosmetic upgrades are on the cards



FIAT 124 SPORT SPIDER

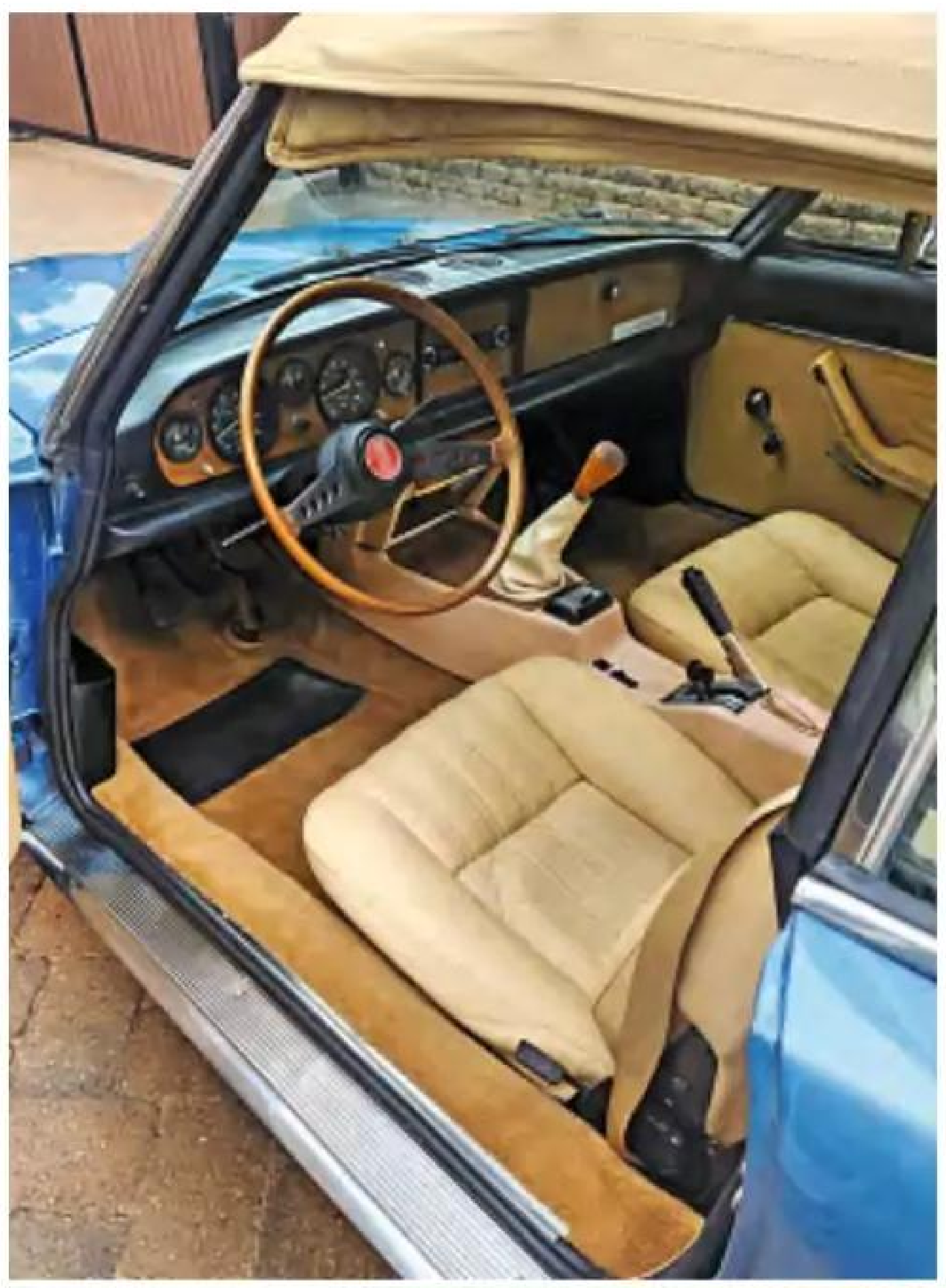
OWNED BY Michael Elvans
FIRST CLASSIC 1964 Singer Vogue
DREAM CLASSIC Ferrari 250 Lusso

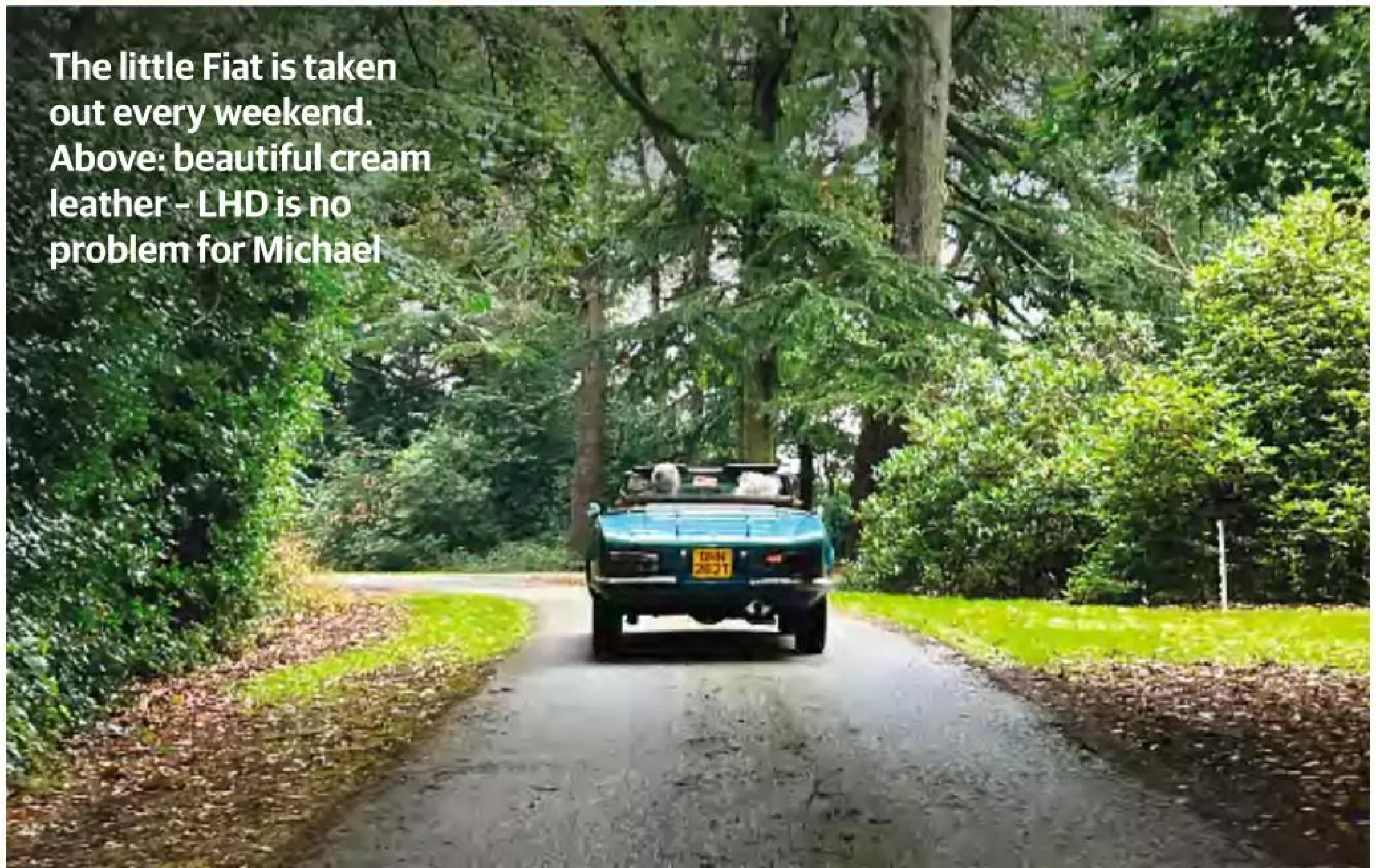
THIS ONE REALLY IS FOR KEEPS

In February 2009, *C&SC* published a *Your classic* story of my purchase of a Ferrari 348tb, which I took to my home in Spain. I ended by stating: 'I can't see myself ever letting go of it.' Inevitably, though, following five fabulous years, the Ferrari was sold. An R230 Mercedes-Benz SL and a glorious Bentley Continental GTC followed, but then I retired and the hunt was on for a true classic.

The shortlist was narrowed to an Alfa Romeo Spider, a Lancia Beta Spider or a Fiat 124 Spider. I managed to miss the Classic Car Auctions sale in June 2024 when there was a very pretty 124 Spider on the block, but once I realised the car hadn't sold I gave them a call and a deal was done. My wife and I took the train to Wakefield, where the vendor kindly collected us from the station and took us to his workshop. The beautiful, Pininfarina-designed Fiat was parked front and centre, finished in Azzuro Metallic with cream leather and smart Cromodora alloys. The car had come from California some time in 2020 and had been restored there, but it's not perfect, which is how I like them. Once it arrived in the UK, its owner had replaced most of the engine ancillaries, the soft-top, and all the brakes and carpets. It was an equal delight and relief to see that the car was as described.

A few Spiders were converted to right-hand drive, but most are left-hookers, which doesn't bother me in the slightest. The 25-mile drive home was great fun: the thin, wood-rimmed wheel felt alive, the 2-litre twin-cam loves to rev, and it cruised happily at an indicated 70mph (probably closer to 55) in fifth. This is what motoring used to be like.





The little Fiat is taken out every weekend. Above: beautiful cream leather – LHD is no problem for Michael

The Fiat is rust-free and a joy to work on, and thankfully it already had European-spec bumpers, so the first job was to remove the ugly plastic door mirrors and replace them with circular chromed ones. The plan was to slowly improve the car's appearance and to use it as much as possible during the summer. I ordered the missing Pininfarina side badges, fresh sunvisors, a new rear-view mirror, plus other bits and pieces. The brake servo and fluid reservoir were replaced and a friend went over the electrics: he discovered a corroded connector behind the dash, cleaned it and now the previously erratic tail-lights work perfectly. He is currently restoring an Alfasud, so is used to 1970s Italian build quality.

This Fiat has the hated smog-reduction system, but the vacuum lines have all disintegrated and I plan to change the carburettor and intake manifold to European spec. This will liberate power and should help with fuel efficiency.

We take the Spider out every weekend, and we were recently invited to the Auto Italia Car Day at Carlton Towers, near Selby in North Yorkshire. A quietly spoken lady said ours was the prettiest car at the show and asked to sit in it for her photograph to be taken. High praise indeed. Everyone who sees it says the same thing: "Isn't it beautiful?" My wife has christened the car Sophia, I presume after another Italian beauty. I have no intention of letting go of either.

> *'On the drive home the 124 Spider was great fun. This is what motoring used to be like'*

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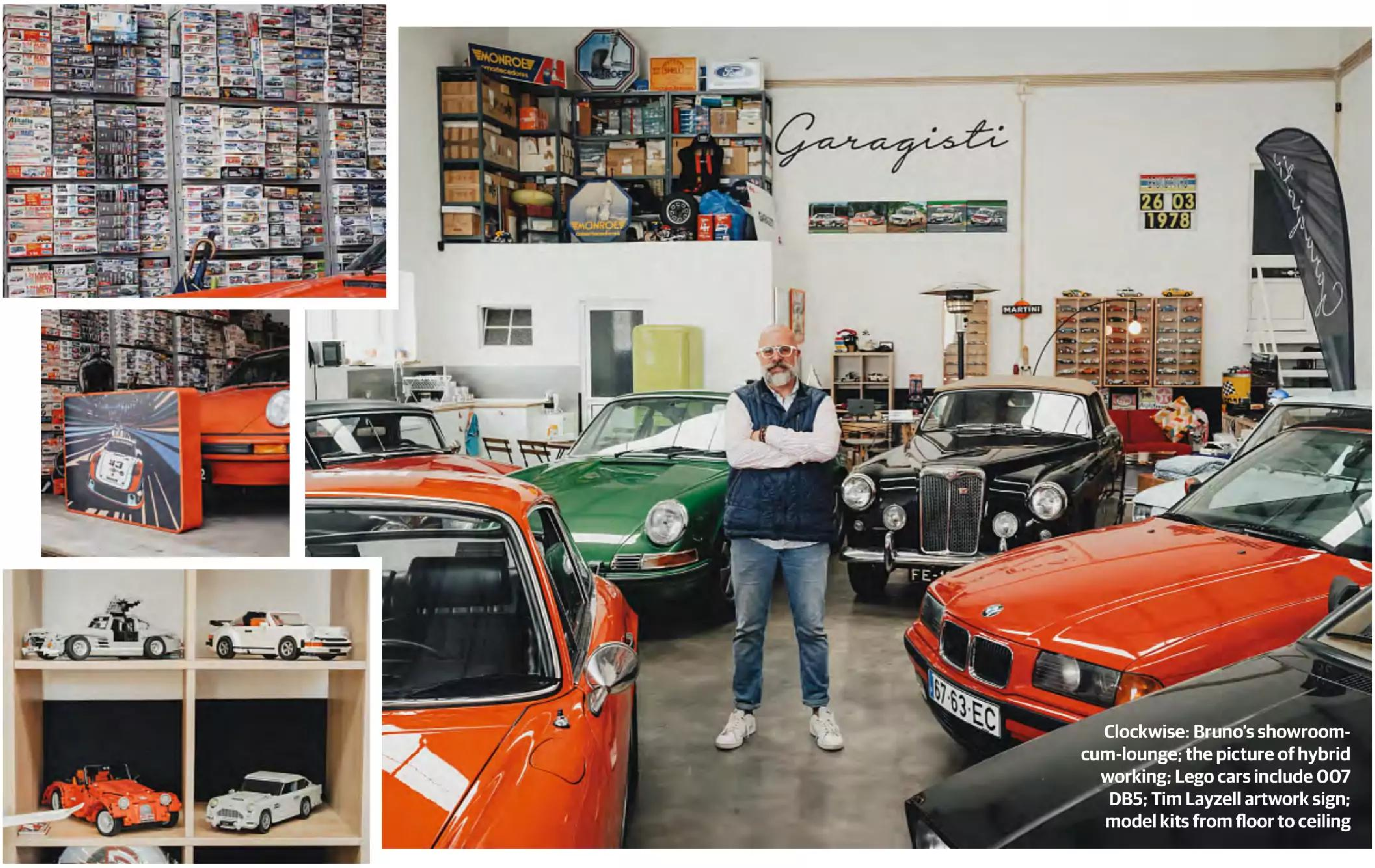

Clockwise: Bruno's showroom-cum-lounge; the picture of hybrid working; Lego cars include 007 DB5; Tim Layzell artwork sign; model kits from floor to ceiling

BRUNO PINHA

This Portugese car dealer felt so at home in his garage that he now lives in it

WORDS **CHARLIE CALDERWOOD** PHOTOGRAPHY **MAX EDLESTON**

What does Bruno Pinha have in his garage? Everything. Since 2024, this car enthusiast and classic dealer has lived inside his motor house, with its main room becoming a shrine to his passion for cars that's expressed in both the vehicles themselves and a large collection of scale models.

The idea came to Lisbon native Bruno when, after his divorce, he needed a place to stay. His dealership, Garagisti, nestled in the wine-making hillside town of Bucelas, already had a kitchenette and a bathroom, so he saved himself a commute and moved in.

The back of the garage became his living room and office, although Bruno admits that it does get cold in the huge, high-ceilinged space during the winter, as he gestures to the outdoor patio heater next to his sofa. To the rear of the garage another room, which is much better insulated, became a bedroom.

As the sort of dealer who only buys cars he is interested in, Bruno's stock has become not only a question of what he gets to drive on any given day, but also his living room's décor. Just beyond the dinner table is a rare Arnolt-MG (*C&SC*, September 2025), next to which is a pair of classic Porsche 911s. It is not just full-size cars in this ultimate bachelor pad, however, because he is also a lifelong model collector.

"This was my father's obsession," Bruno says, pointing at a wall of boxes of model kits. "He was a fine scale modeller, but he never did one kit exactly as it came out of the box." From a glass cabinet, he pulls out one of his father's finished models to demonstrate custom details such as windows made of thin foil rather than acrylic, to achieve a more realistic thickness. Many of the kits – they vary from a Tamiya Porsche 911 GT1 to a Revell E46 BMW 3 Series Austrian Touring Car and an Airfix Triumph TR7 – are unfinished models his father started before he passed away in 2012: "It's a way of remembering him every time I come home."

Bruno caught the bug in his own way: glass-fronted cabinets on his walls house a collection of 1:24 and 1:64 models, this time purchased completed. His 1:64s make a varied group of primarily road cars, from a Citroën 2CV to a Chevrolet Corvette C3. "Some of them were in my room when I was a child – the F40, EB110 and most of the Mercedes-Benz models," he says. The cabinet of 1:24s is a more recent collection that depicts every Rally Portugal winner of the classic era, and on top of the unit sits a backpack from the 1980 event.

Elsewhere, Bruno displays a large selection of automotive Lego models: there are familiar sets such as James Bond's DB5 or the Porsche 911 turbo, but also a number of others far too niche to ever receive the official treatment, such as a Mazda 787, a Porsche 917 and a life-size model of one of Ayrton Senna's helmets. Bruno says: "An Italian guy, Pasquale Di Stasio, is considered one of the best brick builders around. You buy a set of instructions, stickers and a list of parts from him, then you buy the pieces for the kit yourself."

Space is getting tight in the garage. Squashed among the cars and other automobilia are a Honda XL350 motorcycle, a host of Martini-liveried objects and a huge metal Tim Layzell artwork. Bruno's solution isn't to move out: his long-term plan is to build a mezzanine level that will provide more – and better-insulated – living space, as well as the perfect viewing platform from which to admire his cars.

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THE MARKETPLACE

The world's greatest classic market starts here: all the latest news, buying tips, sensational cars for sale, plus top products and services

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ADVERTISING FEATURE

PICK OF THE MONTH

Great classic cars, products and services from our partners

1953 JAGUAR XK120 DHC

WinSpeed of Guildford; 01483 537706; winspeedmotorsport.com

This magnificent and immaculate XK120 drophead coupé is a left-hand-drive example finished in Old English White with red leather trim. It has been fully restored with lovely attention to detail, and features sensible upgrades including electronic ignition, a five-speed transmission, disc front brakes, an aluminium radiator and an alternator. The cabin boasts a high-quality retrim by Suffolk & Turley, and it comes with excellent history. Maintained by WinSpeed of Guildford, this super car is on the button and ready to be enjoyed. **£97,500**

Harry Metcalfe's Jaguar XJC V12 (on left) hit £140k on the hammer, topping the rest of his collection

EVERYMAN HEROES STIR NEC

The Iconic Auctioneers sale across 8-9 November achieved £8.5m for 337 cars from its notably large arena at this year's Classic Motor Show at the NEC (*News & events*). Excitement for everyday modern classics set the tempo that broke 12 model world records.

Fever for YouTube star Harry Metcalfe's manual-equipped 1978 XJC V12 restomod led to a high for the model at auction, at £157,500, eclipsing the £63k for an uprated 1977 'XJC-R', also by specialist Tom Lenthall, and £132,750 for Harry's 1971 Lamborghini Espada S2.

Low-mileage, collector-quality cars headed the field, particularly in Saturday's sale, setting new model records with a 5565-mile 1987 Ford Capri 280 at £63,000 and a 7873-mile 1990 Mercedes-Benz R107 300SL at £55,125. Another surprise was the £52,875 result for a 1998 Land Rover Freelander in Sunday's sale – the Camel Trophy entrant was largely original, from long-term ownership, and blew past its £8-10k estimate.

Iconic Auctioneers also claimed a record for the Ford Escort XR3, but didn't disclose the private sale figure for what is thought to be the sole-remaining unrestored press car. Curiously, the ex-press and first-built 1977 Vauxhall Chevette HS found just £32,625 in the hall.

The unique 1995 Porsche 911 (964/993) turbo S Convertible (*Lots to watch*, December) achieved £805,000, while a 22,656-mile 1990 Porsche 911 (964) Carrera 4 in Grand Prix White took a mid-guide £108,000. Modern Mercedes-Benz SLs performed, too, with £66,375 for a rare, Brabus-tuned R230 'SV12' leading strong results for a pair of SL55 AMGs at £32,625 and £41,625. Another German doing well was an '01 Audi RS4 Avant that sold for £48,375. Rare Japanese classics included a 22,697-mile, UK-supplied 1978 Toyota Carina that took a low-estimate £20,700 and a 1974 Datsun 240Z Super Samuri – the reworked version by former Broadspeed man Spike Anderson – that remained unsold against a £42-46k guide. Two rare examples of the Fiat Uno Turbo ie starred, with a 1987 Mk1 taking £15,750 and a 1991 model £24,740.

Iconic Auctioneers continued its habit of offering former royal Range Rovers, with a Tonga Green 2007 TDV8 example first owned by Queen Elizabeth II selling for £66,375, but a 2010 TDV8 ex-Royal Protection Vehicle example didn't meet reserve. Perhaps even more notable was the 8136-mile 1999 4.6 HSE with less famous provenance that sold over estimate for £32,625.

Most of the soft results were for traditional classics, with £57,375 for a flat-floor 1961 Jaguar E-type fhc, £31,500 for a '62 Austin-Healey 3000 MkII and £69,750 for a '67 Mercedes-Benz 250SL – the latter two just under their guides. Even the first production '58 MGA Twin Cam, out of a 40-year ownership, remained unsold against a £30-40k guide, and a set of 1970s Jaguars for restoration, including a factory experimental manual 1970 XJ12, hardly made £1000 each. But not all moderns were safe, either: the 2002 Aston Martin Vanquish bought new by Hugh Grant sold for just £39,375, while another didn't meet its £40k reserve.

HAMMER FALLS ON PRE-VETERAN RUN SALES

Leading up to November's London to Brighton Veteran Car Run, Bonhams|Cars and RM Sotheby's held sales in the UK capital on 31 October and 1 November respectively. Star of the former was undoubtedly the 'Bolster Panhard', which exceeded its £300k top estimate with a £322k result. The racing driver and motoring journalist John Bolster bought the 1902 Panhard et Levassor 7hp Twin-Cylinder Rear Entrance Tonneau (left) in the '30s and campaigned it on the Veteran Car Run from 1946-'83. Other highlights included an 1899 Benz Velo at £227,700 and a £167,900 1915 Mercedes 22/50hp Open Tourer.

RM Sotheby's led its sale with more modern machinery, including £2,817,500 for a 1937 Alfa Romeo 8C-2900B Spider. Among the veteran highlights were a rare 1904 Talbot CT4VB 12/16hp Brougham that took £207k and a 1904 Turner-Miesse 10hp Rear Entry Tonneau Steam Car that achieved £109,250. Also notable was a rare early surviving 1908 Rolls-Royce 40/50hp Silver Ghost Landaulette by Barker that, back in its original form after a 1990s restoration, found a new owner for £331,250.

On 6-7 October, RM Sotheby's also held a sale in Hershey, Pennsylvania, USA, featuring a wealth of pre-war lots and a handful of veteran machines. A twin-cylinder 1904 Winton 20hp Rear Entrance Tonneau sold for $209k and a 10.5-litre 1905 Panhard et Levassor Type Q racer (left) took $605k, the latter restored to its pre-1910 trials configuration. The top result at Hershey, however, was a 1937 Bugatti Type 57 Cabriolet with unidentified period Belgian cabriolet bodywork, at $759,000.

WHITE STALLION LEADS THE LINE AT KISSIMMEE

Mecum Auctions will headline its flagship Kissimmee sale from 6-18 January with a Ferrari 250GTO (above). Chassis 3729GT was first delivered in May '62 to team owner and Jaguar dealer John Coombs, uniquely finished in the Bianco Speciale that it wears today, and raced by Roy Salvadori, Graham Hill, Jack Sears and Mike Parkes alongside Coombs' own E-types. Rumours that the Jaguar loyalist bought the car to spur on Coventry to develop the E-type Lightweight, and that 3729GT went to Browns Lane for benchmark testing, were confirmed years later.

The white GTO continued to be campaigned by new owners Eddie Portman from '64 and John Pearce later that year, then after a 1967 overhaul including a replacement GTE-spec engine and repaint to red, it was purchased in 1970 by Jack Sears, who kept it active in historic motorsport. In 1999, Microsoft's Jon Shirley bought the car, racing it in Cavallino, Ferrari Maserati Historic Challenge and Monterey Historic events through the early 2000s. With a fresh, Ferrari Classiche-built engine installed by Bob Houghton, the car received its Red Book certification at Maranello in 2008 and has more recently been shown at Hampton Court Palace for the Concours of Elegance and at Rétromobile.

Mecum Auctions will also field a large collection of low-mileage Ferraris from Phil and Martha Bachman (below left) at the Florida sale. Of the 46 cars, 24 are yellow, honouring a trend begun by Phil with his first Ferrari, a 308GTS *quattrovalvole*, ordered new in 1984. Most are from the modern era, such as the only factory-supplied yellow FXX, an Enzo-derived car from 2006, and the last F355 Spider, also in Giallo. Older Ferraris on offer include a 1953 166MM Vignale Spyder, a 1964 250GT Lusso, an alloy-bodied 1967 275GTB/4 and a trio of 365GTB/4 Daytonas.

LOTS TO WATCH

Stanley Steamer
This 1924 steam car from one-family ownership since 1960 is due to feature at Burns & Co's 8-10 December auction.

Lancia Beta Spyder
Hobbs Parker is set to offer this 1979 Beta Spyder, fresh from a big service and with 108,000 miles, at its 17 December sale.

Williams-Renault FW19
Renault's heritage sale on 17 December will include this 1997 ex-Brazilian Grand Prix car, estimated at €800k-1m.

MINI GOES BACK TO THE WORKS

The Cooper Car Company has relaunched its Grand Prix conversion for the classic Mini, echoing the original that led the firm's revival in the '90s under Mike Cooper. As before, production is limited to 35 units, but with more power and modern features. The A-series engine has been fettled to more than 100bhp (against the original's 85bhp), with twin-point fuel injection and a Janspeed exhaust, while behind 12in Cooper alloys are four-piston front brake calipers and Super-fin drums at the rear. The interior is trimmed in green leather (unlike the 1990s version's cream) and houses a relatively harmonious digital infotainment system supporting Apple CarPlay. Each car is hand-assembled to order, but all Grand Prix components can be bought separately. See coopercarcompany.com

AUCTION DIARY

DECEMBER

4-6 Mecum Auctions
Kansas City, Missouri, USA
mecumauctions.com

5 RM Sotheby's Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
rmsothebys.com

6 Manor Park Classics Runcorn, Cheshire *manorparkclassics.com*

6 WB & Sons Newcastle, Tyne & Wear *wbandsons.com*

7 Artcurial Flins-sur-Seine, France *artcurial.com*

7 Webb's Auckland, New Zealand *webbs.co.nz*

8-10 Burns & Co Melbourne, Victoria, Australia
burnsandcoauctions.com.au

10 Brightwells Leominster, Herefordshire *brightwells.com*

10 Mathewsons Online (UK)
mathewsons.co.uk

11 Bonhams|Cars London
bonhams.com

15 Osenat Fontainebleau, France *osenat.com*

17 Ewbank's Woking, Surrey
ewbankauctions.co.uk

17-18 Hobbs Parker Ashford, Kent *hobbsparker.co.uk*

29 Oldtimer Galerie Gstaad, Switzerland *oldtimergalerie.ch*

JANUARY

6-18 Mecum Auctions
Kissimmee, FL, USA *mecum.com*

17-25 Barrett-Jackson
Scottsdale, Arizona, USA
barrett-jackson.com

23 Bonhams|Cars Scottsdale, Arizona, USA *bonhams.com*

23 RM Sotheby's Phoenix, Arizona, USA *rmsothebys.com*

24 Barons MPC Southampton, Hampshire *manorparkclassics.com*

27 Artcurial Paris, France
artcurial.com

28 RM Sotheby's Paris, France
rmsothebys.com

29 Bonhams|Cars Paris, France
bonhams.com

29 Gooding Christie's Paris, France *goodingco.com*

29 SWVA Holton Heath, Dorset *swva.co.uk*

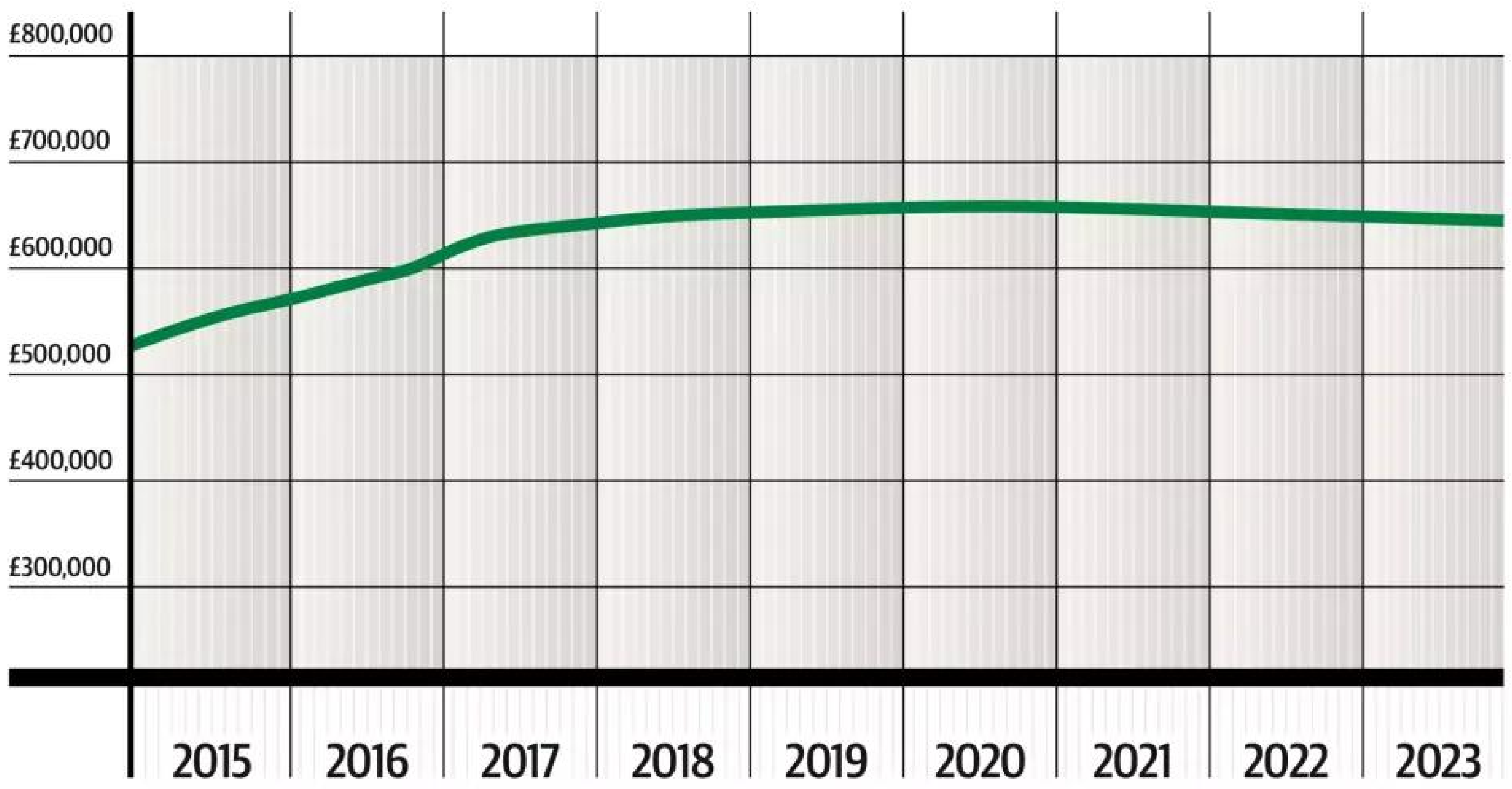
31 WB & Sons Newcastle, Tyne & Wear *wbandsons.com*

Details correct at time of writing – please check that sales are on before visiting venues

Buckley's deals on wheels

AUBURN SPEEDSTER

Ups and downs of a glamourpuss



Average global auction sold price of Auburn Eight Supercharged Speedsters

OF ONLY **15** EXAMPLES SOLD, **£657,904** IS THE MEDIAN PRICE

£996,950 WAS THE HIGHEST **851** PRICE, AT MONTEREY IN 2024

SPEEDSTER **REPLICAS** ARE POPULAR, BUT AVERAGE JUST **£46,735**

Auburn first marketed a Speedster in 1928, in an effort to add gloss to its stuffy image. With super-salesman EL Cord at the helm, its cars rivalled sibling Duesenberg in the glamour stakes, with the Speedster as the halo product. The flagship 1931-'34 edition had a Lycoming V12, but in the midst of the Depression it was deemed a bit too much of a good thing and only 25 were built.

It is the last-of-the-line 851S and 852S models of 1935 and '36 that tend to steal the headlines, and have been considered to be collectible for many years. Stylist Gordon Buehrig repurposed 50 leftover 1934 boat-tail bodies with flamboyantly streamlined pontoon wings, reclining radiator shells and squat, aggressively raked 'screens. It rivalled Europe's most beautiful shapes, but looked all-American at the same time.

These last Auburn Speedsters inspired not only dozens of replica tribute acts, but also production-car homages such as the 1971 Buick Riviera. The archetypal 'Hollywood car', the Speedster in 150bhp supercharged straight-eight 'SC' form (again a flathead by Lycoming, with a Cummins blower) had chromed exhaust headers exiting flashily from the side of an immense bonnet. Each $2245 SC was certified to attain 100mph, had hydraulic brakes and six speeds thanks to a dual-ratio rear axle. Estimates vary, but it is believed 150 were built.

About 30 1935-'36 Speedsters have crossed the auction block since 2016, ranging in price from $475,000 to $1.7m. There were several no-sales in 2025, but the Speedster's outrageous styling insulates it to an extent from the generational erosion that most pre-war cars suffer.

"The 1935 and '36 models are the most popular and expensive," says collector Scott Blustein, who owns a 1931 898A. "Real 1930s Speedsters are holding their own, like other high-end collector cars, and they're such crowd-pleasers that they tend to appeal across generations. But there are a lot of modified Auburns that people claim to be real Speedsters."

The Classic Valuer uses global auction data to provide motoring market insights. For more, visit ***theclassicvaluer.com***

THE CLASSIC VALUER

AUCTION RESULTS

October's top 50 worldwide sales

JB Giesse Racing 1998 Ferrari 333SP took CHF5,208,125 at the RM Sotheby's Zurich sale

$621k for 1909 Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost

Jerry Seinfeld's Ruf-tuned 911S, $657k

PRICE	CAR	SALE
£4,974,950	**2017 Ferrari LaFerrari Aperta**	RM Sotheby's, Zurich, Switzerland
£4,922,075	**2016 Ferrari FXX K Evo**	RM Sotheby's, Zurich, Switzerland
£4,895,638	**1998 Ferrari 333SP**	RM Sotheby's, Zurich, Switzerland
£4,212,975	**1996 Ferrari F50**	RM Sotheby's, Munich, Germany
£3,811,700	**2008 Ferrari FXX Evo**	RM Sotheby's, Zurich, Switzerland
£3,124,325	**2014 Ferrari LaFerrari**	RM Sotheby's, Zurich, Switzerland
£2,780,638	**1989 Ferrari F40**	RM Sotheby's, Zurich, Switzerland
£2,623,594	**1967 Ferrari 275GTB/4**	Broad Arrow Auctions, Knokke-Heist, Belgium
£2,595,575	**2012 Ferrari 599XX Evo**	RM Sotheby's, Zurich, Switzerland
£2,301,150	**1991 Ferrari F40**	Bonhams|Cars, Knokke-Heist, Belgium
£2,100,000	**1989 Porsche 911 DLS by Singer**	Bring a Trailer, online (USA)
£2,059,725	**1965 Ferrari 275GTB**	RM Sotheby's, Munich, Germany
£1,865,063	**1998 Lamborghini Pregunta**	Broad Arrow Auctions, Knokke-Heist, Belgium
£1,725,750	**2015 Porsche 918 Spyder**	Bring a Trailer, online (USA)
£1,717,163	**2008 Bugatti Veyron 16.4 Pur Sang**	RM Sotheby's, Munich, Germany
£1,643,825	**2012 Ferrari 599SA Aperta**	RM Sotheby's, Zurich, Switzerland
£1,620,375	**2015 Bugatti Veyron 16.4 Grand Sport Vitesse**	Broad Arrow Auctions, Knokke-Heist, Belgium
£1,375,688	**1992 Bugatti EB110 GT**	Broad Arrow Auctions, Knokke-Heist, Belgium
£1,276,725	**1957 BMW 507**	RM Sotheby's, Munich, Germany
£1,273,700	**2016 Ferrari F12tdf**	RM Sotheby's, Zurich, Switzerland
£1,252,256	**2011 Ferrari 599SA Aperta**	RM Sotheby's, Munich, Germany
£1,200,600	**1963 Ferrari 250GT Lusso**	Bonhams|Cars, Knokke-Heist, Belgium
£1,174,500	**2005 Porsche Carrera GT**	Broad Arrow Auctions, Knokke-Heist, Belgium
£1,002,700	**1960 Mercedes-Benz 300SL Roadster**	Bring a Trailer, online (USA)
£930,013	**2019 Ferrari 488GTE Evo**	RM Sotheby's, Zurich, Switzerland
£893,000	**2010 Ferrari 599GTO**	RM Sotheby's, Zurich, Switzerland
£893,000	**2015 Ferrari 458 Speciale A**	RM Sotheby's, Zurich, Switzerland
£858,800	**1995 Porsche 911 (993) Gunther Werks Speedster**	Bring a Trailer, online (USA)
£787,350	**2019 McLaren Senna GTR prototype**	RM Sotheby's, Munich, Germany
£719,925	**1970 Ferrari 365GTB/4 Daytona Competizione**	Broad Arrow Auctions, Knokke-Heist, Belgium
£679,688	**2010 Ferrari 599GTO**	RM Sotheby's, Munich, Germany
£676,400	**2001 Lamborghini Diablo VT 6.0**	Bring a Trailer, online (USA)
£665,638	**2019 Ferrari 488 Pista Piloti**	RM Sotheby's, Zurich, Switzerland
£661,200	**2011 Ferrari 599GTO**	Broad Arrow Auctions, Knokke-Heist, Belgium
£630,750	**1998 Porsche 911 (993) turbo S**	RM Sotheby's, Munich, Germany
£623,250	**2009 Ferrari 430 Scuderia Spider 16M**	Bring a Trailer, online (USA)
£622,500	**2012 Lexus LFA**	Bring a Trailer, online (USA)
£622,050	**2009 Mercedes-Benz SLR McLaren 722S Roadster**	Broad Arrow Auctions, Knokke-Heist, Belgium
£586,325	**1973 Ferrari 365GTB/4 Daytona**	RM Sotheby's, Zurich, Switzerland
£569,250	**1937 Bugatti Type 57 Cabriolet**	RM Sotheby's, Hershey, PA, USA
£556,875	**2006 Ford GT**	Barrett-Jackson, Scottsdale, AZ, USA
£543,750	**1976 Lancia HF Stratos Group 4**	Broad Arrow Auctions, Knokke-Heist, Belgium
£532,800	**1959/1982 Ferrari Testa Rossa by Tempero**	Bring a Trailer, online (USA)
£529,100	**1990 Mercedes-Benz 190E 2.5-16 Evolution II**	Bonhams|Cars, Newport, RI, USA
£525,263	**1969 Ferrari 365GTB/4 Daytona**	Bonhams|Cars, Knokke-Heist, Belgium
£525,000	**2017 Ferrari F12berlinetta 70th Anniversary Edition**	Bring a Trailer, online (USA)
£512,300	**2002 Ferrari 550 Barchetta**	RM Sotheby's, Zurich, Switzerland
£495,000	**2006 Ford GT**	Barrett-Jackson, Scottsdale, AZ, USA
£493,725	**1980 BMW M1**	RM Sotheby's, Munich, Germany
£486,180	**1971 Porsche 911S by Ruf**	Bring a Trailer, online (USA)

Excluding cars under five years old. Exchange rates correct at time of sale; prices include buyer's premium. For more, see ***classicandsportscar.com***

Scale 1/18

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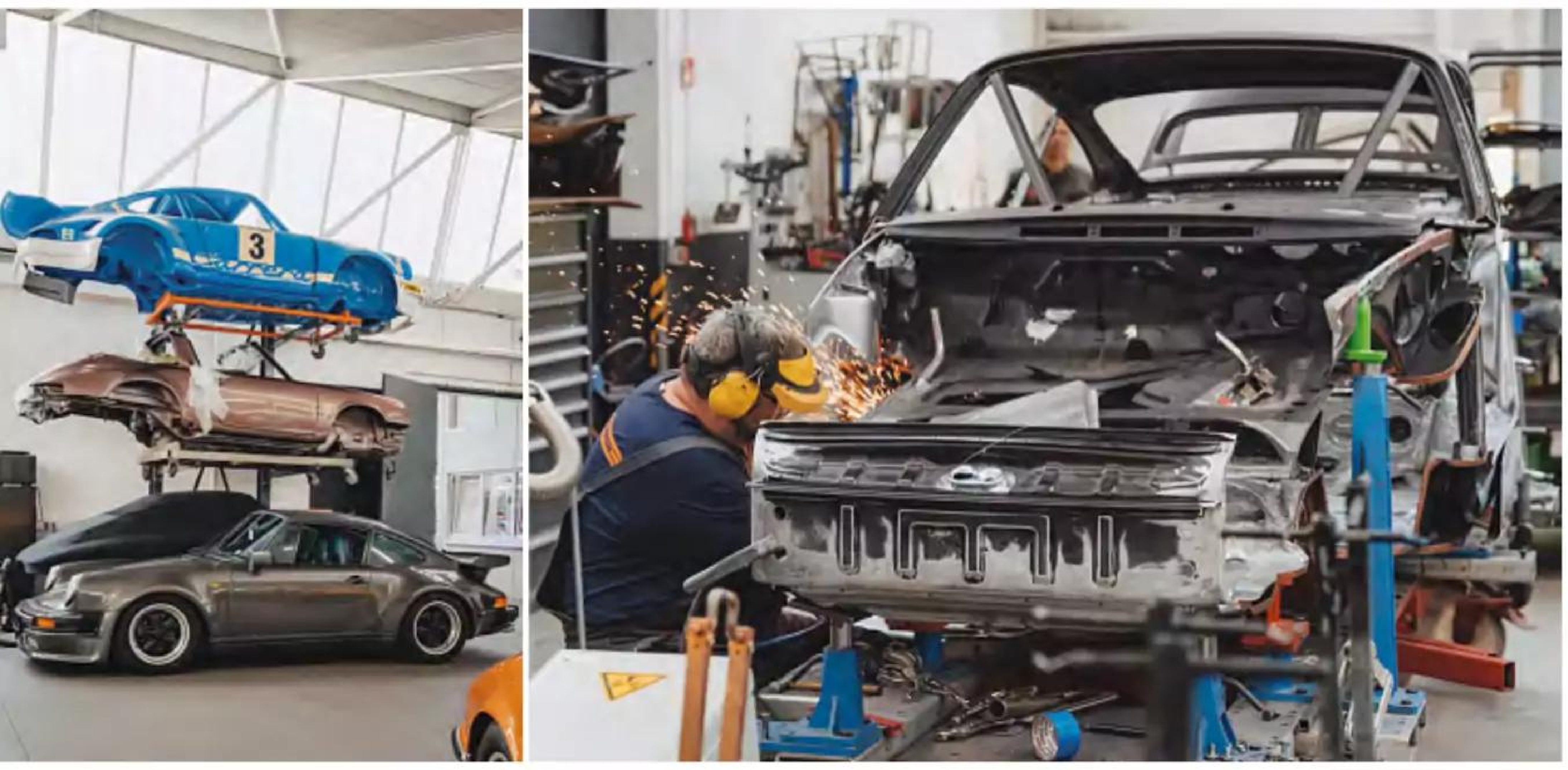
Image courtesy of H&H Auctions.

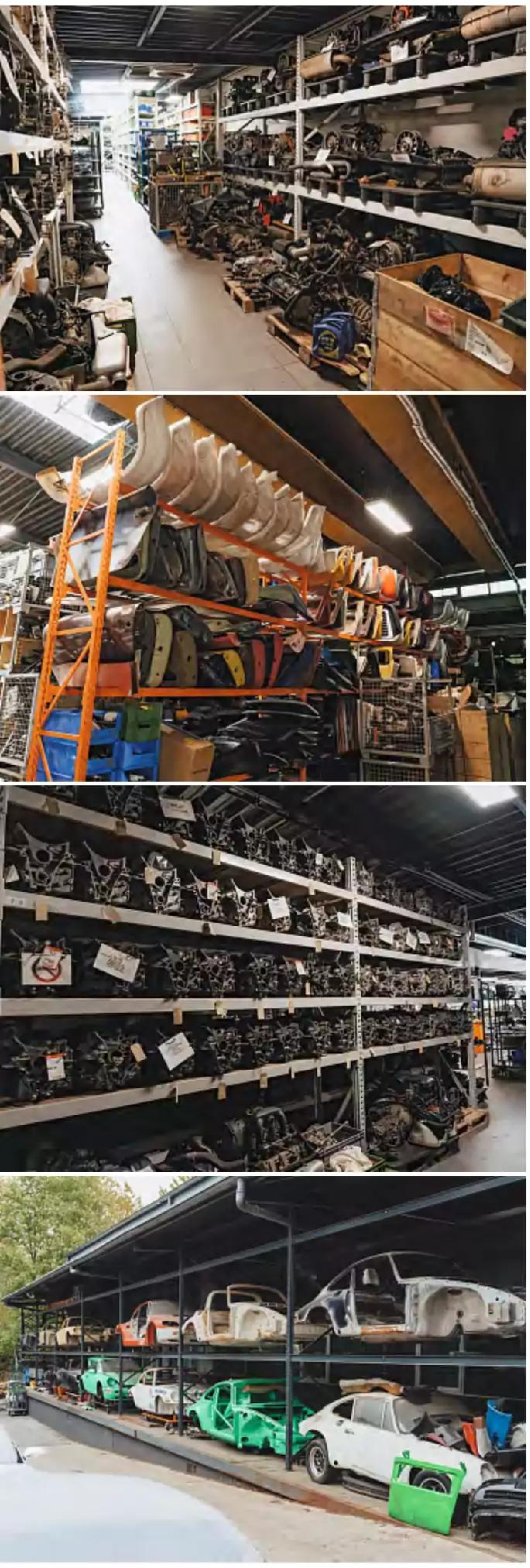
BREIZ PESKED
FERODO
PORSCHE

Classic Porsches abound, and not a restomod in sight. Early 911S has hundreds of cars in at any time, 60-70% of them for international customers

Departures from classic 911 work include this 1950s Porsche Jagdwagen, intended for military use



From left: projects stacked high; typical F-series rebuild takes 2000-2500 hours; 'whale tails' ahoy



Extensive parts storage includes racks for, from top: engines; bumpers and body panels; gearboxes; bodyshells, stored both inside and out

STRENGTH IN NUMBERS

Early 911S takes a laser focus on originality to impressive volumes of Porsche restorations

WORDS **CHARLIE CALDERWOOD** PHOTOGRAPHY **MAX EDLESTON**

Nothing can prepare you for the scale of entering Early 911S. There have been car factories that are smaller, with less inventory, than this Wuppertal premises in Germany's Rhineland. Only the Porsche 911, a car that is unusually valuable for something built in such volume, could support an operation like this.

The huge demand for well-restored *elfers* is made clear by how select Early 911S can afford to be, despite a throughput of about 170 cars in restoration at any one time. It stops at the 993 generation, the last 911s to be air-cooled, and work is done only to factory spec (although minor trim modifications and similar are catered for). If you want your 911 restomodded or prepared for motorsport, you'll need to go elsewhere. What really excites the team at Early 911S are the rare factory variants.

That includes the few competition cars here – all genuine works examples being built to original specifications. In the company's main showroom is the car Åke Andersson drove to third in the 1967 Gulf London Rally, fresh from a meticulous restoration, along with a uniquely mint-green-coloured 911 built for the Porsche family and six of the few Porsche 901s in private hands – a 911 so early it isn't called a 911.

For the really weird stuff, the firm will even stray beyond the 911. One of the seven Porsche B32s ever built is here – a Type 3 van fitted with 911 Carrera 3.2 running gear. There are also several Porsche-built off-roaders, including a handful of Jagdwagens, a Kübelwagen-like machine of which only 71 were built in an unsuccessful attempt to win a Bundeswehr contract.

The company's aftersales manager, Daniel Neumann, has a passion for unusually coloured 911s – he points out a Mexico Blue G-model Speedster that's one of just three built, then he stops at a stripped, freshly painted bodyshell. "It's a pleasure for us to do it in the original way," he enthuses. "We copy how the factory would paint little bits of black or grey around certain seams inside the tub."

This obsession with authenticity is more than just an arbitrary fascination for Early 911S, it reflects Germany's strict modification rules that require every non-standard part to be tested by a TÜV authority. "We do it very well, and we're doing lots of cars, so we are sure they will work worldwide," says Daniel. "About 60-70% of our cars go for export."

Porsche Classic's extensive catalogue makes building to original specification much easier, with OE parts availability most classic owners could only dream of. But the real edge of Early 911S is its unrivalled spares store: vast shelving units run down either side of a huge hall stacked three bodyshells high – there are 200 of the best-condition bodies in here, plus another 300 outside. Between them are 1500 Euroboxes full of everything from bumpers to interior trim pieces, all reserved for customer cars.

Another long room houses gearboxes and engines, all awaiting in-house reconditioning. "We try to use original parts and restore them," Daniel says. "When you buy only new ones, the restoration can become too expensive – and many are not as good as old parts, anyway."

Founded relatively recently, in 2006, Early 911S now employs 85 people, all beginning from founder Manfred Hering's frustration at the restoration process of an Aston Martin and a Porsche 911 he owned – that Manfred ultimately chose to focus on the German car should disappoint Aston owners everywhere. Almost every part of the restoration, whether it's the bodywork, interior trimming, painting, wiring or engine building, is handled in-house. Best of all, there is a strong sense of long-term thinking here, be it in the gargantuan spares supply or in a large cohort – currently 17 – of keen apprentices.

The knowledge

Name Early 911S
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Web early911s.de

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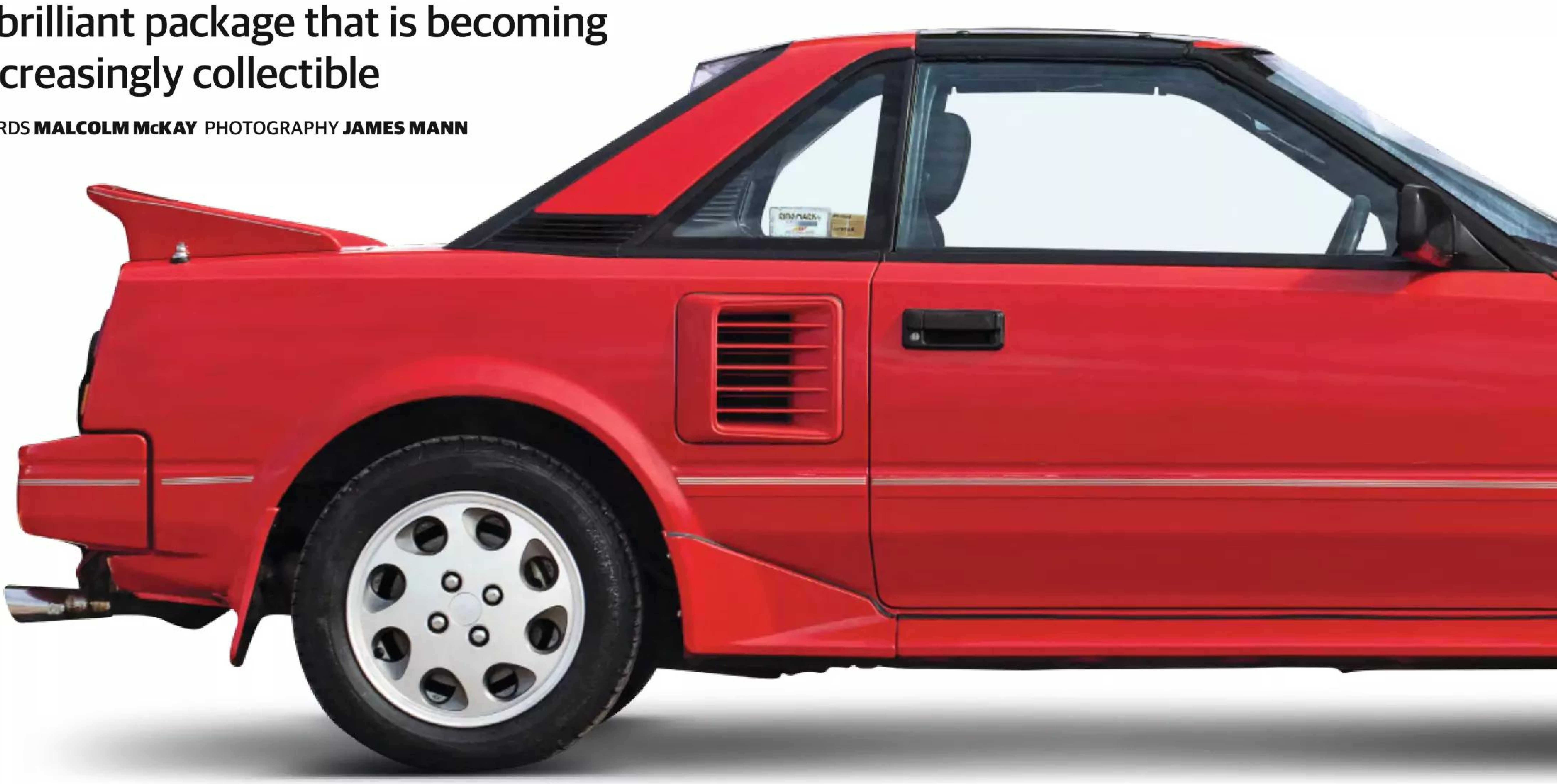
Japan's first mid-engined sports car was a brilliant package that is becoming increasingly collectible

WORDS **MALCOLM McKAY** PHOTOGRAPHY **JAMES MANN**



Toyota took a lesson from the Fiat X1/9, scaling the concept up just enough to capture the former MGB market sector with a beautifully balanced, mid-engined coupé powered by an oversquare, twin-cam four-cylinder. The Yamaha-designed, 16-valve heads for the 123kg 4A-GE engine were brand new in 1983, and Toyota's Variable Induction System (T-VIS) used fewer ports at low revs to speed gas flow and aid flexibility of the high-revving unit.

This was Japan's first mid-engined mass-production car, and it boosted worldwide sales of the layout far beyond the X1/9. Toyota part-owned Lotus, but insisted the MR2 was wholly in-house engineered (although Roger Becker of Lotus was later widely credited with input, along with racer Dan Gurney). The 44% front, 56% rear weight distribution gave superb traction and great balance, with only a slight susceptibility to crosswinds. The Toyota was a brilliant cross-country car and a capable cruiser, but care was needed on wet roads.

The MR2 was perfectly proportioned for two, with an ensconcing cabin. The sunroof lifted out and could be stored in the front boot (later T-bar sections would fit behind the seats), and there was a decent rear boot for luggage.

In the UK, only the normally aspirated 1587cc with a five-speed manual 'box was sold, but in Japan the same engine was offered with a four-speed auto. Also for the home market was a single-overhead-cam, 1452cc economy model and, from mid-'85, a supercharged 1.6.

By this time, Toyota had perfected frequent component changes without affecting profit margins, so details were constantly evolving in addition to the bigger alterations that followed – marque guru Neil Jones has noted no fewer than seven different versions of the T-VIS intake during MR2 Mk1 production.

With a reliable, durable drivetrain, mostly shared across many models, the MR2's biggest challenge has been rust. Now, 37 years after the last Mk1s were built, most survivors have been extensively repaired and many have had component changes, for expediency or more performance. Valued highest are originality and low mileages, but tasteful improvements are still popular. There is far more choice in the market with upgraded cars and Japanese imports, especially of supercharged models.

TROUBLE SPOTS

RUST Check the crossmember behind nose cone, floorpans (look underneath carpets), sills (especially behind side skirts and join to rear-wing B-posts), wheelarches front and rear, bottom of front wings and A-posts, around windscreen (especially the front of the roof), around sunroof underneath seals, rear subframes, boot floor under liner, rear bumper crossmember, front-to-rear heater pipes (Mk1a) and exhaust system

ENGINE Watch for oil leaks, coolant leaks, mixing of oil and coolant, overheating, and damage to sump from rust and grounding out. Ensure that the cambelt has been renewed in the past six years or budget to replace. Check colour of the coolant and that the white reservoir cap isn't cracked

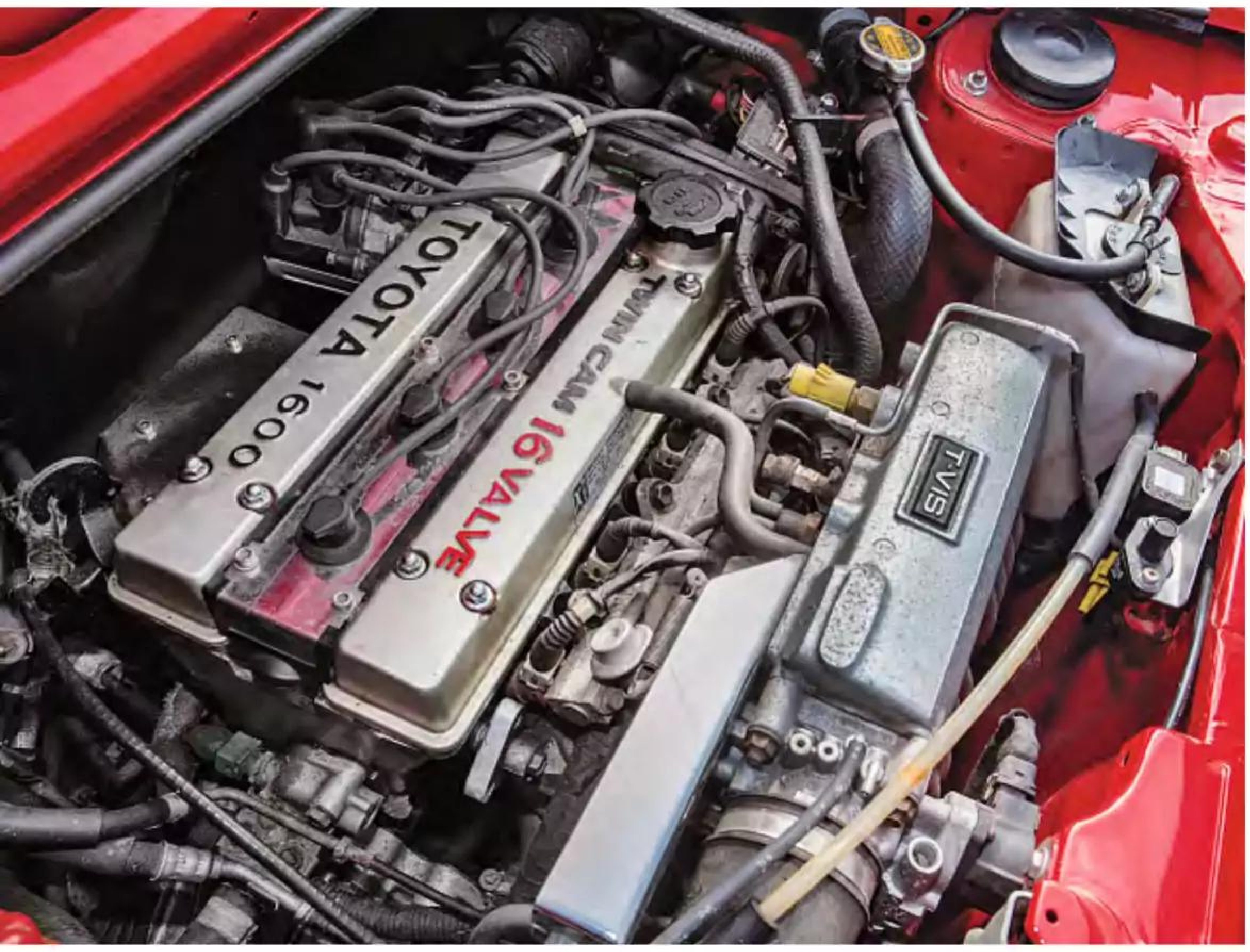
ELECTRICS Ensure everything works, including electrically operated windows and mirrors (standard on UK cars)

GEARBOX Look out for jumping out of fifth, or excessive rocking on/off throttle

TOYOTA
E815 MPR
TOYOTA MR2
TWIN CAM 16
MR2

The MR2, here in Mk1b T-bar form, was an in-house design at Toyota by Seiichi Yamauchi, and its simple, sharp lines have lasted well

The MR2 was well-equipped and had a great cockpit layout, ideal to enjoy the superb handling. 'The Fun is Back!' was a well-chosen Toyota slogan, and the car's great poise and healthy performance (120mph-plus top speed and 8 secs 0-60mph) enabled it to humble many more expensive cars on twisty roads



The superb Toyota twin-cam gave a healthy 122bhp and a good spread of power aided by the T-VIS intake, revving smoothly to 7500rpm; the block was stiffened in 1986. Check service history for frequent oil changes and thorough maintenance; look for oil and coolant leaks, also filler caps for signs of mixing

Check the lights work and frames are not corroded. Look in the crossmember and behind nosecone for rust, also the radiator top and below front boot liner

The Mk1b has tougher suspension and brakes, often retrofitted to earlier cars whose discs could warp. Check steering and suspension bushes for excess wear

Unusually, cloth seats are more durable than leather: these have been very well retrimmed. Removable roof sections can leak, but new seals are available

The gearbox was complimented when new for a precise, slick change; jumping out of fifth on the overrun and excessive movement on/off throttle shows wear

MR2 is a great handler with good mid-engined balance, but low weight and a decent power output demand some care on wet roads

Before you buy

Engines are very durable if well maintained – service intervals are 5000 miles (Mk1a), 6000 miles (Mk1b), plus cambelt and tensioner at 60,000 miles; belt failures are rare, and it's a non-interference unit. The early engine (to August 1986) is the 'blue top' – silver cam covers with lettering in black and blue. From August 1986 to May '89, the blue lettering changed to red: this engine had larger big ends and seven reinforcing ribs on the back of the block instead of three. The third generation is the 'red top', with all cam-cover lettering in red and no black: this version had smaller intake ports and a higher compression ratio.

Oil leaks around the distributor are common, caused by failed O-rings; the rocker-cover gasket is another common fail point. The oil-pressure gauge should read about ½ at idle and ¾ at speed. On the test drive, check that the heater works – bleeding the cooling system is a complex process and airlocks are common, so overheating might only be this. Listen for clonks from worn suspension and steering bushes. When checking for the gearbox jumping out of fifth, feel for any clutch slip.

Many cars have been upgraded, which may be as simple as fitting the later brakes to cure brake judder or more complex changes such as supercharger transplants into standard cars; some even have Mk2 turbo engines retrofitted. If the performance has been uprated, check the brakes and suspension have, too – and run it all past your insurer before buying.

OWNING ONE

"When I worked in a quarry," recalls **Jim Rogers**, "my boss had a T-bar MR2. I loved it but could never afford one at the time. I've always had sporty cars. I had to sell my Escort RS 2000 Mk2 when I got married, then I had a Metro Turbo that was always getting stolen – like the XR2i that followed it, then an XR3i… Last year, I finally achieved my dream: I took the money out of my savings account, then went and bought the MR2. It surprised my wife because it's my first classic and my first true sports car – and I was amazed to be complimented on it at a petrol station on the day I bought it! My daughters love it, too.

"I'm planning to keep on top of it, because they're known for rusting out. T-bars are also prone to leaking, but you can still buy a new set of seals. Both the body and the engine were restored in 2014 for the previous owner, and it won a car show in 2016."

> *"I was amazed to be complimented on it at a petrol station on the day I bought it!"*

ALTERNATIVES

FIAT X1/9 *1972-'89, c180,000 built*
The X1/9 is narrower and lower but a little longer than the MR2. Fun and lively, it's not in the Toyota's league, but is a mid-engined sports-car innovator. Most have since rusted away. **Price now** £2500-17,500

RM SOTHEBY'S

PONTIAC FIERO *1983-'88, 370,168 built*
Not sold in the UK and a bold move for the august American maker, the spaceframed, glassfibre-bodied, mid-engined Fiero had double the MR2's sales, but was sluggish in comparison. **Price now** £1500-12,500

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THE KNOWLEDGE

TIMELINE

1983 SV-3 concept at Tokyo motor show
1984 MR2 launched in Japan: 4A-GE 1587cc (G-Limited) or (Japan-only) 3A-U 1452cc
1985 UK launch. **June** Colour-coded trim, optional side skirts, 'Toyota' rear-window sunshade, leather trim option, bigger flywheel/clutch; Japan-only supercharged option with uprated drivetrain, twin servos
1986 Aug Facelifted Mk1b: new front lip/bumper, two-piece spoiler, stiffer engine, uprated brakes/dampers/springs, front strut-brace, repositioned rear suspension arms, ½in-wider wheels, T-bar roof option
1987 Standard side skirts, colour-coded mirrors; supercharged option in USA
1988 Revised exterior trim, LED spoiler brake light, opaque T-bar glass
1989 Production ends

FACTFILE

Sold/number built 1984-'90/166,104
Construction steel monocoque
Engine iron-block, alloy-head, dohc, 16-valve 1587cc 'four', Denso fuel injection
Max power 122bhp @ 6600rpm to 145bhp @ 6400rpm **Max torque** 105lb ft @ 5000rpm to 137lb ft @ 4400rpm
Transmission five-speed manual or four-speed automatic, RWD
Suspension independent, at **front** by triangulated lower links **rear** transverse and trailing links; MacPherson struts, anti-roll bar f/r
Steering rack and pinion
Brakes vented front, solid rear discs, with servo **Length** 12ft 10½in (3925mm) **Width** 5ft 5½in (1665mm) **Height** 4ft 1¼in (1250mm) **Wheelbase** 7ft 7⅓in (2320mm)
Weight 2244-2494lb (1020-1131kg)
0-60mph 8-6.5 secs
Top speed 122-130mph **Mpg** 30-40
Price new £11,499/11,999 (GT/T-bar, 1987)

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WHAT TO PAY	*Resto/Average/Show*
Mk1	£2000/£5-6500/£15k
Supercharged	£3000/£7-10k/£20k

OUR VERDICT

With upgrades common and a number of Japanese domestic-market cars also now in the mix, it's important to check that what you're looking at is what its seller claims it to be. Even more crucially, ensure that past repairs and any modifications have been competently and comprehensively well executed. For now, values remain low for a genuine classic that has become scarce, so be prepared to travel to find the perfect example for you: get the right MR2 and it will reward you for many years to come.

FOR

Combining legendary Toyota reliability (some have done 250k miles without major work) with a brilliant driving experience, the Mk1 MR2 is increasingly revered as the first of a legendary sports-car line

AGAINST

Rust repairs and correcting poor modifications can easily run up bills that are far higher than the car's current value, so buy with caution

E815 MPR
TOYOTA MR2
TWIN CAM 16
MR2

CAUGHT IN THE CLASSIFIEDS

Tempted? Here are two examples available to buy now

TOYOTA MR2 T-BAR

Year 1990 **Mileage** 90,794 **Price** £8950
Vendor M&M Automotive, Lymington, Hampshire; 01590 688811; mandmautomotive.co.uk
For Original condition; good leather trim
Against Due an MoT; needs detailing

This very original MR2 came from a deceased estate and appears tidy, having covered few miles in the past decade. It's had seven former keepers, who have clearly looked after it, with the service book showing 25 stamps. The cambelt was changed at 52,350 miles so should be replaced, but the car seems cared for and features desirable black leather trim that looks in excellent condition. It's described by the vendor as 'a very presentable, honest example'.

TOYOTA MR2

Year 1989 **Mileage** 86,585 **Price** £9990
Vendor Denovan Motor Co, Larbert, Falkirk; 07901 913124; denovanmotorcoltd.co.uk
For Great colour; recent maintenance
Against Interior won't suit all tastes

In a handsome shade of metallic blue, this sunroof-equipped MR2 coupé looks to be in excellent order, with great paintwork and blue cord fabric trim that appears largely unworn. Described as 'a highly original timewarp example', it has benefitted from a recent cambelt and water pump, and the smart alloys wear recent Yokohama tyres. It comes with plenty of history detailing further work over the years, and it will be serviced before sale.

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Classified pick

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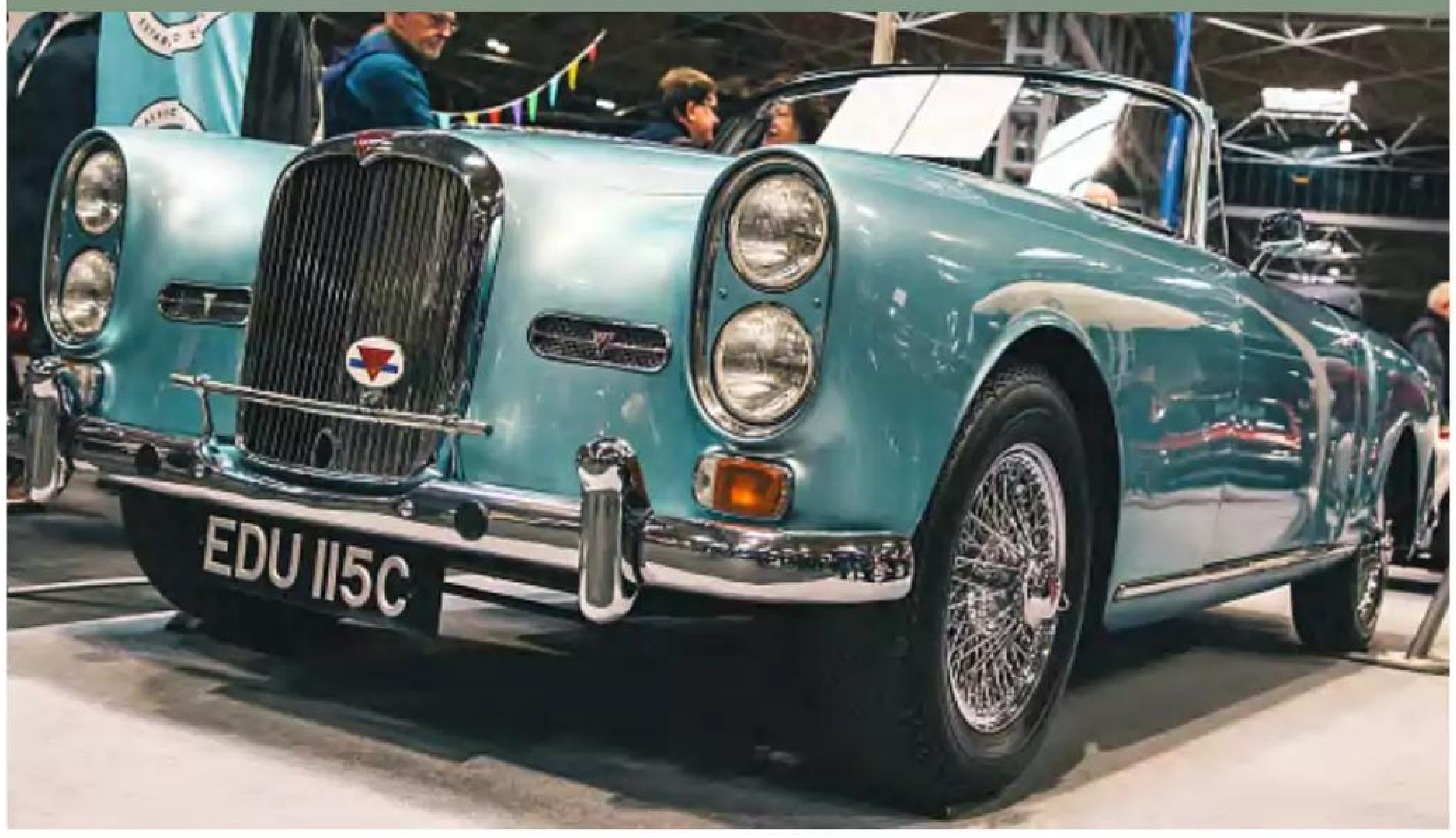

ALVIS TE21 DHC

Year of manufacture 1965 **Recorded mileage** 74,000
Asking price £79,995 **Vendor** Hurst Park Automobiles, East Molesey, Surrey; 07831 427380; hurstpark.co.uk
WHEN IT WAS NEW
Price £2774 (saloon, 1965) **Max power** 130bhp **Max torque** 172lb ft
0-60mph 12.5 secs **Top speed** 107mph **Mpg** 16

Is it too early for dreams of brighter days and long, summer evenings? Opalescent Silver Blue makes a somewhat hypnotising argument that the warm weather is just around the corner, apparently taking any glint of light and transforming it into the shimmering sunshine of the Côte d'Azur – even, as it was displayed in early November, under the incandescent lights of the Hurst Park Automobiles stand at the NEC Classic Motor Show (p14).

This elegant Alvis TE21 drophead coupé would be the perfect grand tourer for seeking Mediterranean rays, with long-legged, 100mph performance and the rich comforts of its luxuriously trimmed interior that has space for four. Its stately Park Ward coachwork looks destined to spend its time between exotic coastal vistas and the long gravel driveways of a mansion home.

As was ever thus, says Trevor Wooding of Hurst Park Automobiles: "Conservatively styled and in a league above the likes of Jaguar, they have never been subject to fashions and were rarely scrapped. Alvis owners tended to have large properties, where these cars would eventually be laid up."

This example was restored in the early 2000s by renowned specialist Earley Engineering, and presents almost as if it had emerged from its works yesterday. Trevor says: "It drives beautifully. Its fifth gear doesn't whine, which is quite unusual for these, and you can put the roof up without trouble or pinching of the doors. It's a properly sorted car." Stored in a collection for the past 20 years, it has needed only routine maintenance and remains as a near-concours example that's ready to go.

The TE21 is towards the end of the Alvis lineage of post-war models before the once aerospace-focused firm went out of business in 1967. Introduced in 1963, this Series III of the 3-litre range was up to 130bhp, had Dunlop disc brakes all round and received the distinctive stacked-headlight nose. "These later cars, with aluminium-framed and panelled doors, are much more lively," Trevor adds. "A TA21 with an automatic 'box is a totally different story."

Indeed, it's this car's ZF manual gearbox and power steering that elevate its appeal. The transmission's five ratios, including a 24.9mph-per-1000rpm overdrive top, open the TE21's performance envelope dramatically, while the assisted helm makes wielding this 1588kg grand tourer a delight rather than a challenge. Summer simply can't come soon enough.

SUMMARY

CHOSEN BY Aaron McKay
FOR Timeless styling in a stunning colour; desirable manual 'box and power steering
AGAINST No sports car, and the fuel costs will be considerable
WHY SHOULD I BUY IT?
For glamorous roof-down drives, and quality construction built to last

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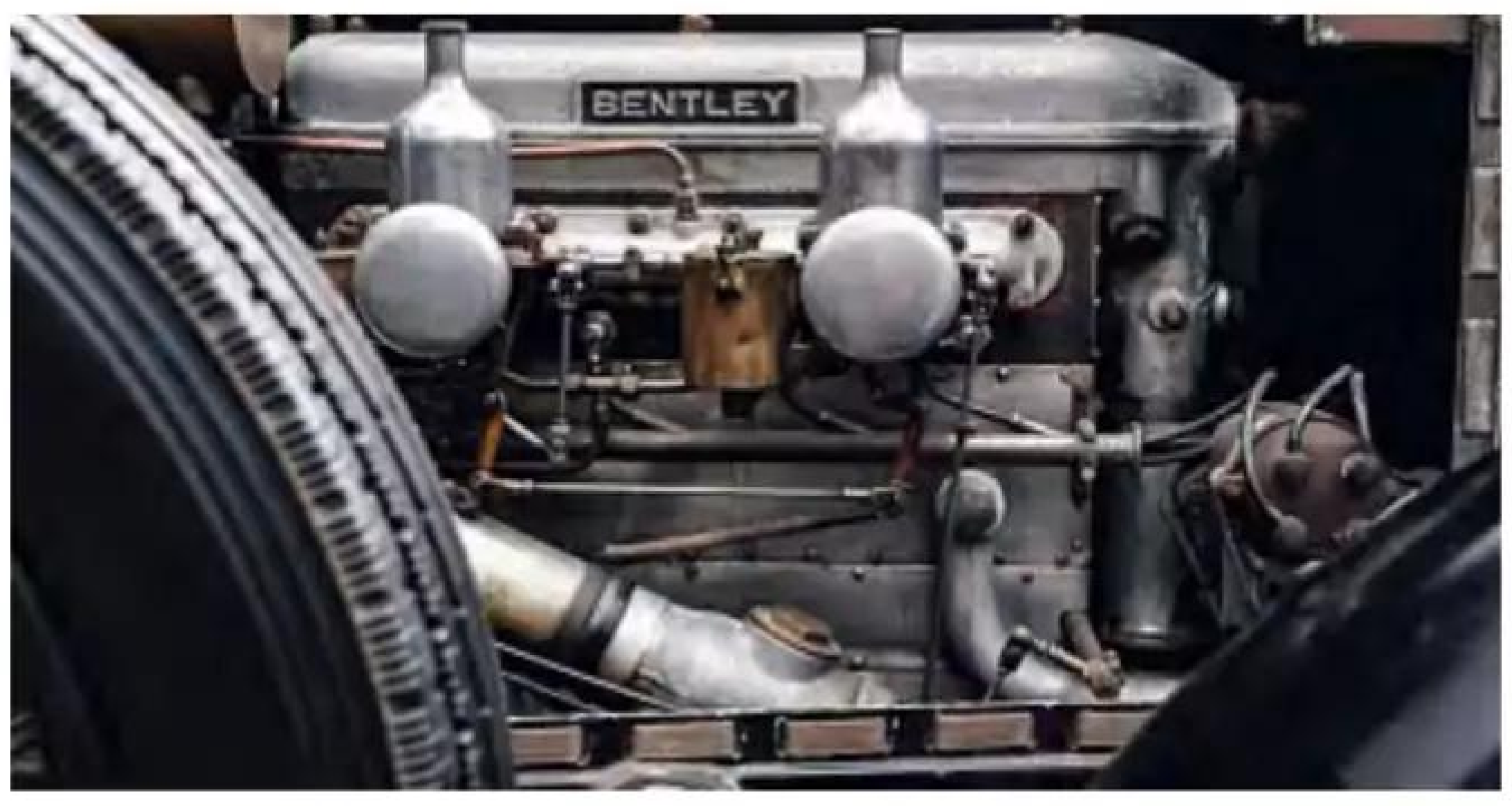

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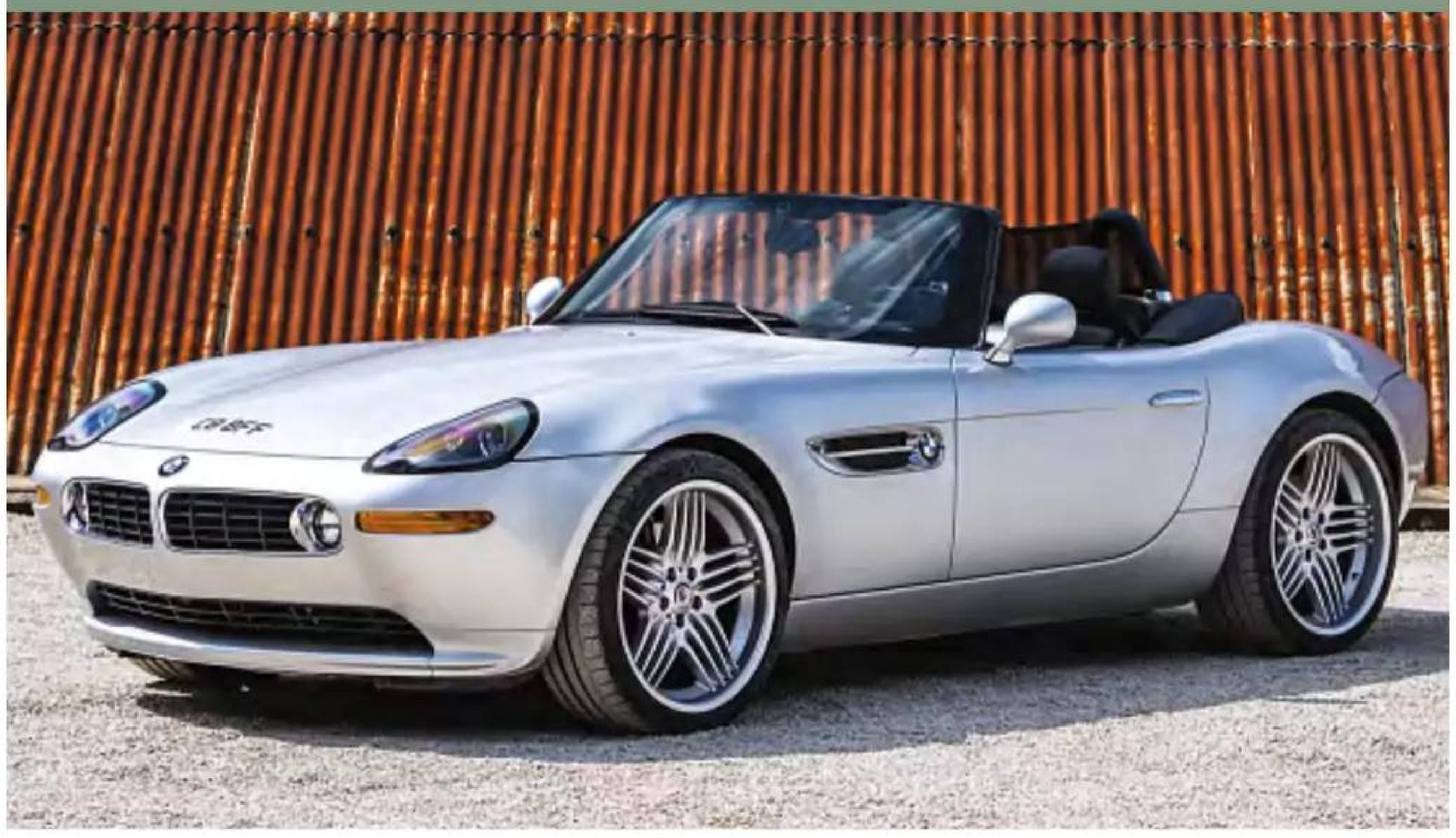
Classified pick

Our favourite cars you can buy this month



BMW ALPINA ROADSTER V8

Year of manufacture 2002 **Recorded mileage** 18,000
Asking price £275,000 **Vendor** The Classic Motor Hub, Gloucestershire; 01242 384092; classicmotorhub.com

WHEN IT WAS NEW
Price £86,000 **Max power** 381bhp **Max torque** 383lb ft
0-62mph 5.3 secs **Top speed** 155mph (limited) **Mpg** 21.4

We all have our automotive favourites, and I must admit BMW isn't a go-to marque for me. Although I could make an exception if I won the lottery…

Seeing any BMW Z8 is a treat – just 5703 were built between 1999 and 2002, after all. But The Classic Motor Hub has this one-of-555, Z8-based Alpina Roadster V8 for sale, which rather ups the ante. It is car number 116, built on 14 October 2002. This left-hand-drive, Titanium Silver example is one of the many (relatively speaking) that was sold new to the USA.

In 2015 it made a return trip across the Atlantic to the UK, then it had another owner from October 2016, the same year in which a service documents that it had done 15,393 miles. By the time it changed hands again, at Bonhams' Goodwood Revival auction in September 2021, its odometer reading still sat at less than 18,000 miles. The Bonhams listing for that sale, unsurprisingly, describes it as being 'in excellent condition throughout', stating it was garaged and driven about once a month; it achieved £197,800.

That fastidious care has continued with its most recent keeper, in whose collection it has been for the past few years, accruing scant miles. The vendor notes that it still has its factory-supplied plastic protection for the floors, something which, bizarrely, Bonhams explained caused it to lose points at a concours because the condition of the carpets couldn't be ascertained.

Given its price-tag, it looks likely that this Alpina's next home will see it kept in the manner to which it has become accustomed, where those plastic coverings are a badge of honour. And there's nothing wrong with that. It's a shame to hide Henrik Fisker's bold lines behind closed doors, though, and for that 4.8-litre V8 to not be used as its maker intended. From Alpina's B10 V8S 5 Series, the engine is actually slightly down on power compared with the standard Z8's 5-litre BMW Motorsport unit, but around 381bhp and 383lb ft (the torque figure is a smidge up on the B10 S) won't feel slow. Get the top down and you'll be able to better appreciate its pounding soundtrack, too. It's sold with its factory-supplied, body-coloured hardtop, while Alpina's 20in alloys and a Nappa-leather-trimmed cabin are further treats.

I am no film buff, so the Z8's Bond connotations do nothing for me, although I know they will inspire some. Yet I think we can all agree that this awesome Alpina deserves a new lease of life.

SUMMARY

CHOSEN BY Lizzie Pope
FOR Rare, low miles and ready to be enjoyed; not slow
AGAINST Rarity might make ownership a challenge; running costs; down on the Z8's pace
WHY SHOULD I BUY IT?
If you want a head-turning modern classic that still has serious go

Marcel Roks Consultants

Lamborghini Countach LP5000 QV, 1987.

Lamborghini Jalpa, 1987.

Alfa Romeo Giulia Sprint Rally, 1963.
Alpine A106 MM. 1955 Mille Miglia car.
Aston Martin DB 2/4 MKII. RHD. 1956.
Fiat 508 CS Balilla Aerodinamica, 1935.
Ferrari 365 GTB/4 Daytona, RHD.
Ferrari 456M GTA, 2002.
Ford GT40 CCV Replica.
Itala Tipo 61 Roadster, 1929.
Jaguar C-Type Alloy replica,1953.
Lamborghini Huracan Sterrato, 2024.
Lancia Lambda 8th. Series, 1928.
Maserati Bora 4.9, 1977.
Cord 812 Supercharged Con., 1937.
Mercedes 300SL Gullwing, 1955.
OSCA 1600 GTV Zagato, 1962.
Porsche 356 1600 Speedster, 1957.

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12,625 miles | £229,950

2012 Ferrari 458 Italia

RHD, U.K. Supplied, Finished in Nero DS over Nero leather, Front Suspension Lift, Premium HiFi System, Parking Camera, Electric Seats, Full Ferrari main dealer service history.

16,250 miles | £129,950

1963 Jaguar E-Type Lightweight

Right-hand drive Series 1 Lightweight race car, FIA registered and highly eligible for a wide array of historic race events including Goodwood, Tour Auto and Le Mans Classic.

0 miles | £259,950

1932 Alfa Romeo 8C by Pur Sang

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3,200 kms | POA

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1964 JAGUAR E TYPE 3.8 SERIES 1 ROADSTER - FULL NUT AND BOLT GROUND UP RESTORATION DOCUMENTED WITH PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD. LEFT HAND DRIVE / MATCHING NUMBERS. SMALL MILEAGE SINCE RESTORATION. SHOWROOM CONDITION.

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1988 Mercedes-Benz R107 300SL £42,995

1987 Mercedes-Benz 300SL R107 £35,995

R129 SL320 Concours Edition £18,995.00

1984 Mercedes-Benz R107 500SL £35,995

1969 MERCEDES-BENZ W113 280SL Pagoda Auto £279,995

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1980 Sauber BMW M1 Gr-5

Offered publicly for the first time, this is the only surviving Sauber BMW M1 Group 5 (chassis #81.M1R.01), one of just two built by Sauber for Le Mans and the World Sportscar Championship. Campaigned between 1981 and 1988, it has a fully documented race and ownership history, retains its original Swiss Wagenpass, Sauber chassis drawings, and period photos. Track-ready in its current state, it requires preparation for historic events like Le Mans Classic or Peter Auto. A rare chance to acquire the last original Sauber BMW M1 Gr-5 eligible for Le Mans Classic 2026. **POA**

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1967 Aston Martin DB6 Saloon
Finished in Ming Blue with Cream Leather, featuring a Vantage RS Williams engine. Cherished by last owner for 40 years, fully restored and completed in 2016. Body off restoration with engine upgrade. Celebrated within Aston Martin Driver Magazine, full documentation.
£299,995

1997 Aston Martin V8 Coupe Auto
Rare, the only example finished in Rolls Royce Garnet Black with Sandstone and Wildberry trim, is one of just 101 built and only 64 delivered in the UK. Powered by a 5.3-litre V8 producing 330bhp, it combines muscular Vantage styling with Virage performance, achieving 0–60mph in under seven seconds. Ordered new as part of a his-and-hers pair, it now shows just 36,999 miles and stands as a highly collectible modern classic. **£89,995**

2004 Aston Martin DB7 Zagato
Number 47 of only 99 built, is finished in Racing Green with Parchment and Forest Green Aniline hides. Powered by a 435bhp V12 with a 6-speed manual, it features Zagato's signature "double-bubble" roof, unique interior trim, and special alloy wheels. First registered in January 2004 and showing just 10,191 miles, it has been meticulously maintained by Aston Martin specialists, making it a superb and rare example of this appreciating modern classic. POA

1989 Aston Martin V8 Zagato Volante
Just 37 built, making it among the rarest Aston Martins ever produced. Originally finished in Pastello Bianca and later refinished in Star Silver, it retains its Burgundy interior, covered headlamps, and 16" Speedline wheels. Powered by a 5.3L V8 with Weber-Marelli fuel injection, it has covered only 16,730 miles from new and comes with full documentation, making it a highly collectible example of Aston Martin's celebrated collaboration with Zagato. **£325,000**

1985 Aston Martin V8 Vantage Saloon
A sought-after Series 2 model, delivers around 375–380bhp from its 5.3L V8 and was once acclaimed as the world's fastest accelerating production car. With aerodynamic enhancements and upgraded suspension and brakes, it achieved 0–60mph in 5.2 seconds and a 175mph top speed. Benefiting from past restoration work, including a respray and specialist servicing, it comes with a comprehensive history file, original tools, and spares, making it a superb example of this iconic supercar. **£264,995**

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Previously sold by us 19years ago and only for sale again due to owners changing circumstances.Reshelled over 20 years ago,alloy bonnet......................**£7750.00**

LAND ROVER S3 SWB
Ex military issue,extensive restoration and in lovely condition..... ....**£12500.00**

2003 MASERATI 4200 CAMBIOCORSA
Just 54k miles & FSH.Sebring blue with cream/blue leather. In excellent all round condition.... ....**£13995.00**

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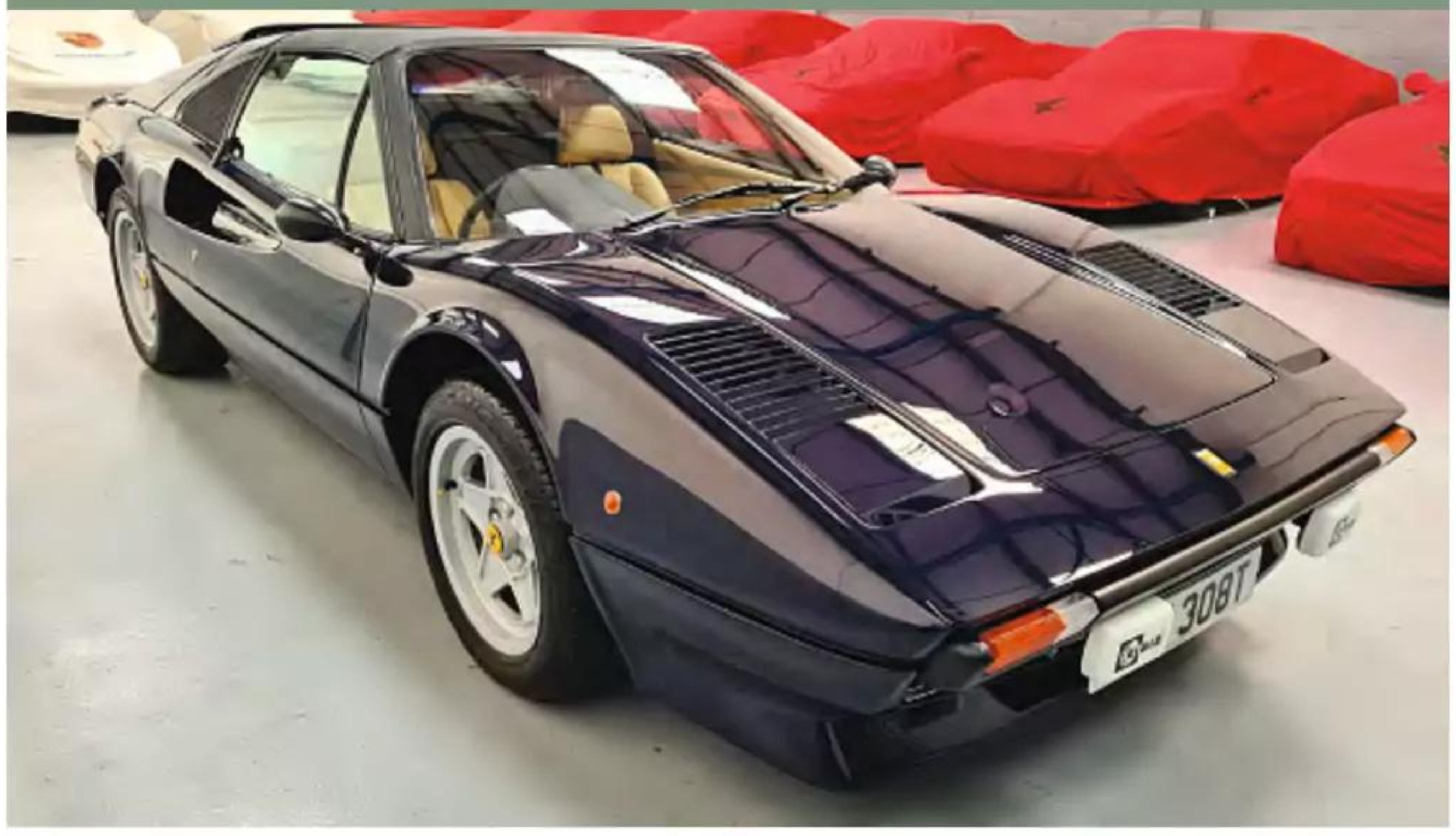
Classified pick

Our favourite cars you can buy this month



FERRARI 308GTS 'SPRINT PACK'

Year of manufacture 1978 **Recorded mileage** 47,150
Asking price £POA **Vendor** Michael Wise Cars, Christchurch, Dorset; 07836 622234; michaelwisecars.co.uk

WHEN IT WAS NEW

Price n/a **Max power** 290bhp **Max torque** n/a
0-60mph 5.5 secs **Top speed** 160mph **Mpg** n/a

So you have cash to splash and you're after the rarest Ferrari 308. You might scan the classifieds for a glassfibre-bodied *Vetroresina*, or what about the Italian-market 208 Turbo, the Prancing Horse's first turbocharged road car? Fewer than 1000 of each were built, so you're unlikely to spot another on a Sunday drive, but if it's ultimate rarity you're after, you will need to sniff out a Sprint Pack-equipped 308. According to marque historian Tony Willis, just four or five were originally fitted with this Ferrari-approved upgrade package. Finding one is the issue, though. Luckily, Dorset-based dealer Michael Wise currently has two for sale – including this 47,150-mile example, the sole GTS.

The open-topped car has belonged to Michael for around six years, during which time it has been fastidiously rebuilt and returned to its original Blu Scuro Dino. All in, it cost more than £75,000 to restore the 308GTS to the condition it was in when it was delivered to first owner John Hervey, 7th Marquess of Bristol, on 4 October 1978. The flamboyant peer, also known as John Jermyn, was friendly with the manager of HR Owen, which perhaps helped when Hervey twisted his arm to persuade Maranello to fit his car with a full-leather cabin. Ferrari wouldn't budge on Hervey's other request: he wanted the Sprint Pack fitted when the car was factory-fresh, rather than running it in for the recommended 3000 miles. Hervey conceded and took the Ferrari to the south of France to rack up the mileage, but the 308GTS conked out on the Continent and Hervey asked a friend to drive it home.

By January 1979 it was back in the UK with 3367 miles on the clock and ready for the Sprint Pack. When it emerged from Maranello Concessionaires' workshop it was kitted out with a larger front spoiler, Speedline wheels and Pirelli P7 tyres. Most of the work was beneath the surface, though: the mid-mounted V8 benefitted from high-lift camshafts, higher compression pistons, an Ansa exhaust and larger jets for the Weber 40DCNFs. Maranello conservatively claimed a 25bhp boost, but the actual figure is probably closer to 40bhp. When *Autosport* tested this very car in October 1979, it reckoned the 0-60mph time had been slashed by a second (from around 6.5 secs for the standard car) and 0-100mph by 3 secs. The magazine described XYU 308T as 'the ultimate development' of the 308GTS. So if you are looking for the Ferrari 308 at its peak, this might just be it.

SUMMARY

CHOSEN BY Ryan Standen
FOR A Prancing Horse with eyebrow-raising provenance and extra poke
AGAINST Uniqueness might make it difficult to use it as you should
WHY SHOULD I BUY IT? To enjoy the racy upgrades and hopefully pile on the miles

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1958 Aston Martin DB24 MkIII modified to fast road, track and hill climb specification. This unique MkIII has only had 3 owners and the current owner since 1983. Maintained and sympathetically modified over the years by an ex Aston Martin Racing Team works mechanic. Lovely history **£144950**

1979 Aston Martin V8 Manual Volante to Vantage Specification. The 2nd RHD V8 Volante to be produced and the first of only 28 RHD manual cars. The engine was converted to V540 Vantage specification with Vantage exhaust with front and rear handling kits **£150000**

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2003 Aston Martin DB7 GTA 1 of 88 RHD cars made **£28995**

2010 Aston Martin DBS Rare desirable Manual version **£82950**

1985 Mercedes Benz 280SL Very original **£24500**

2010 Aston Martin DB9 Only 29k miles FSH **£37500**

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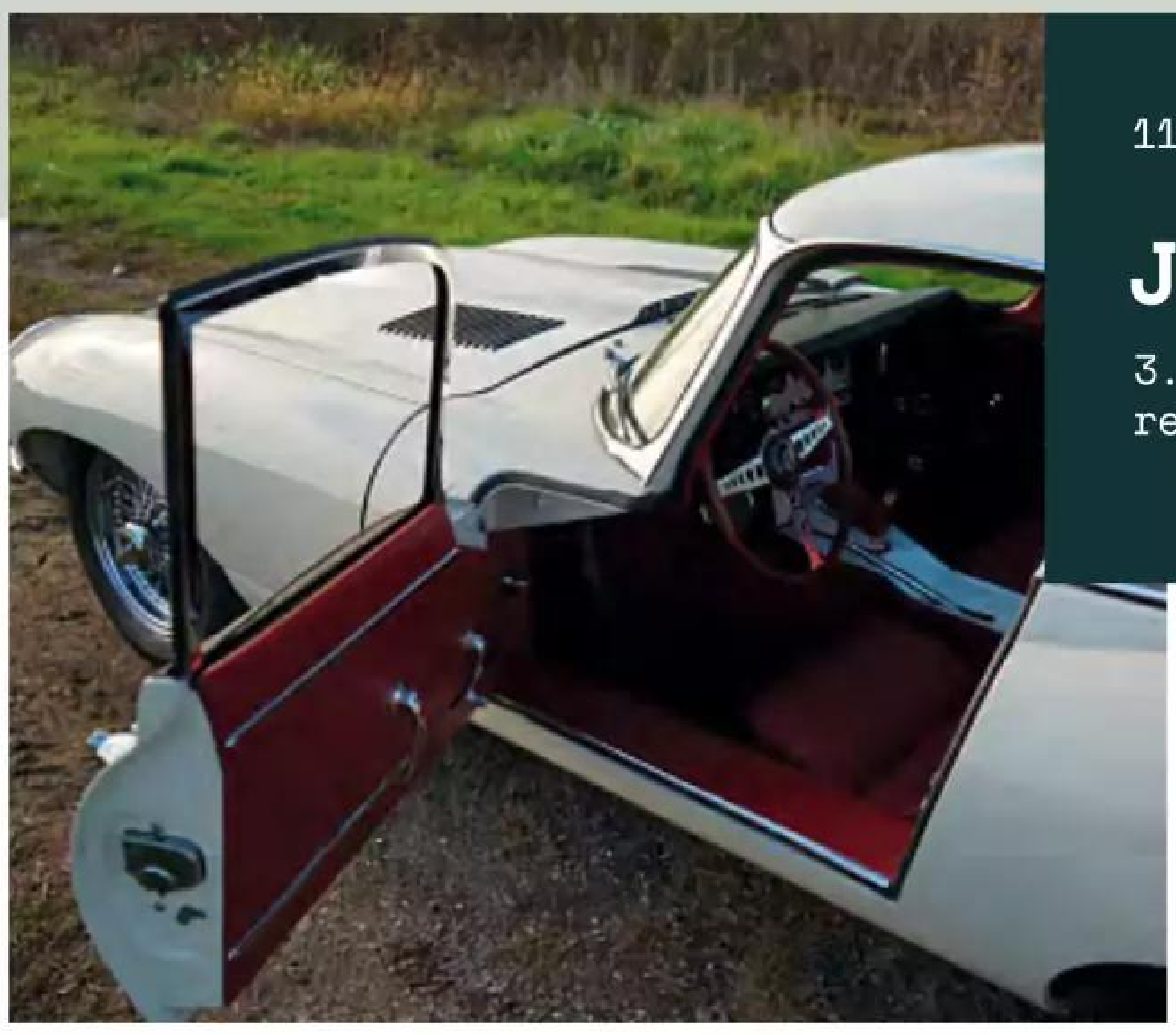

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3.8, cream,
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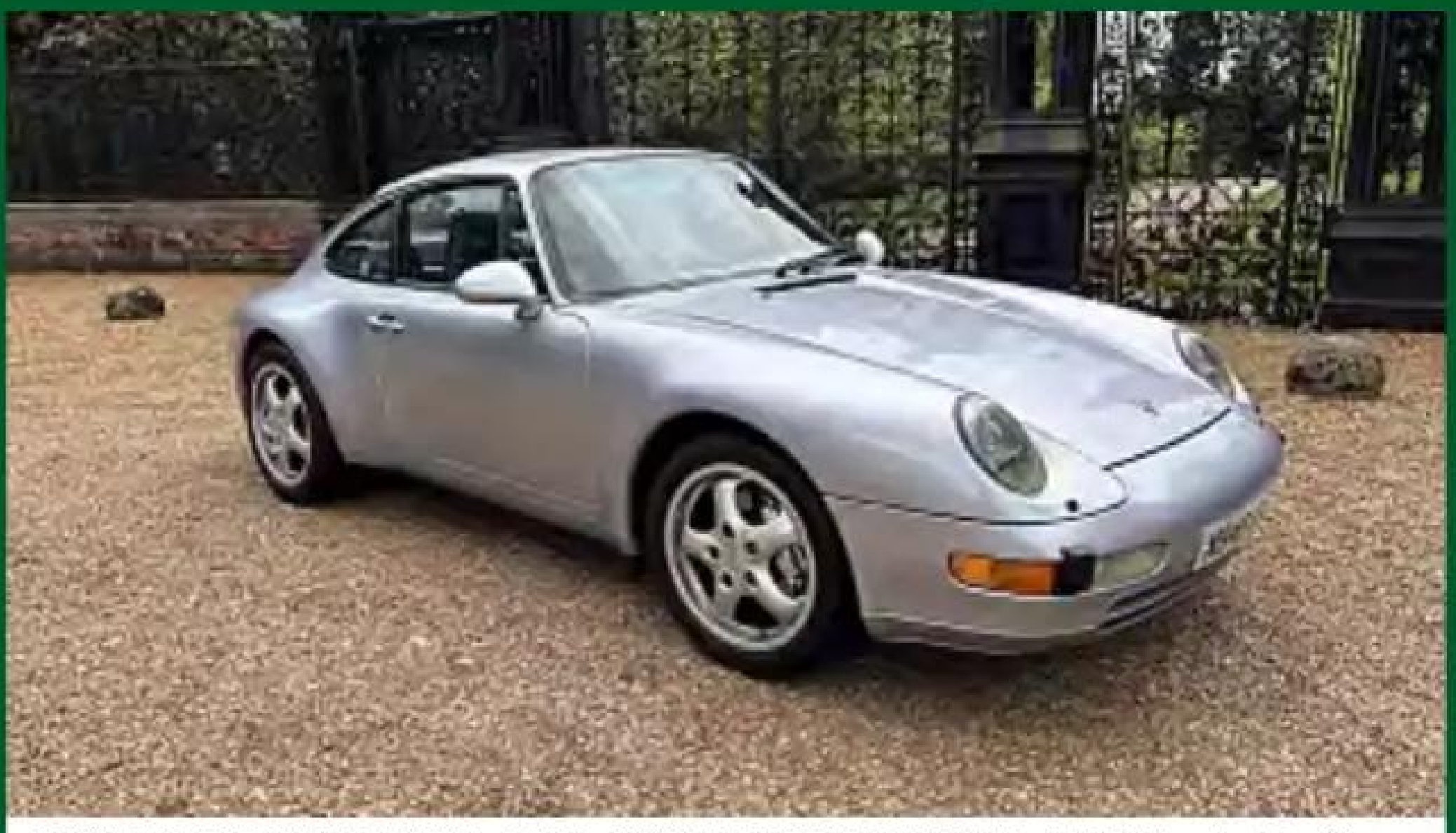
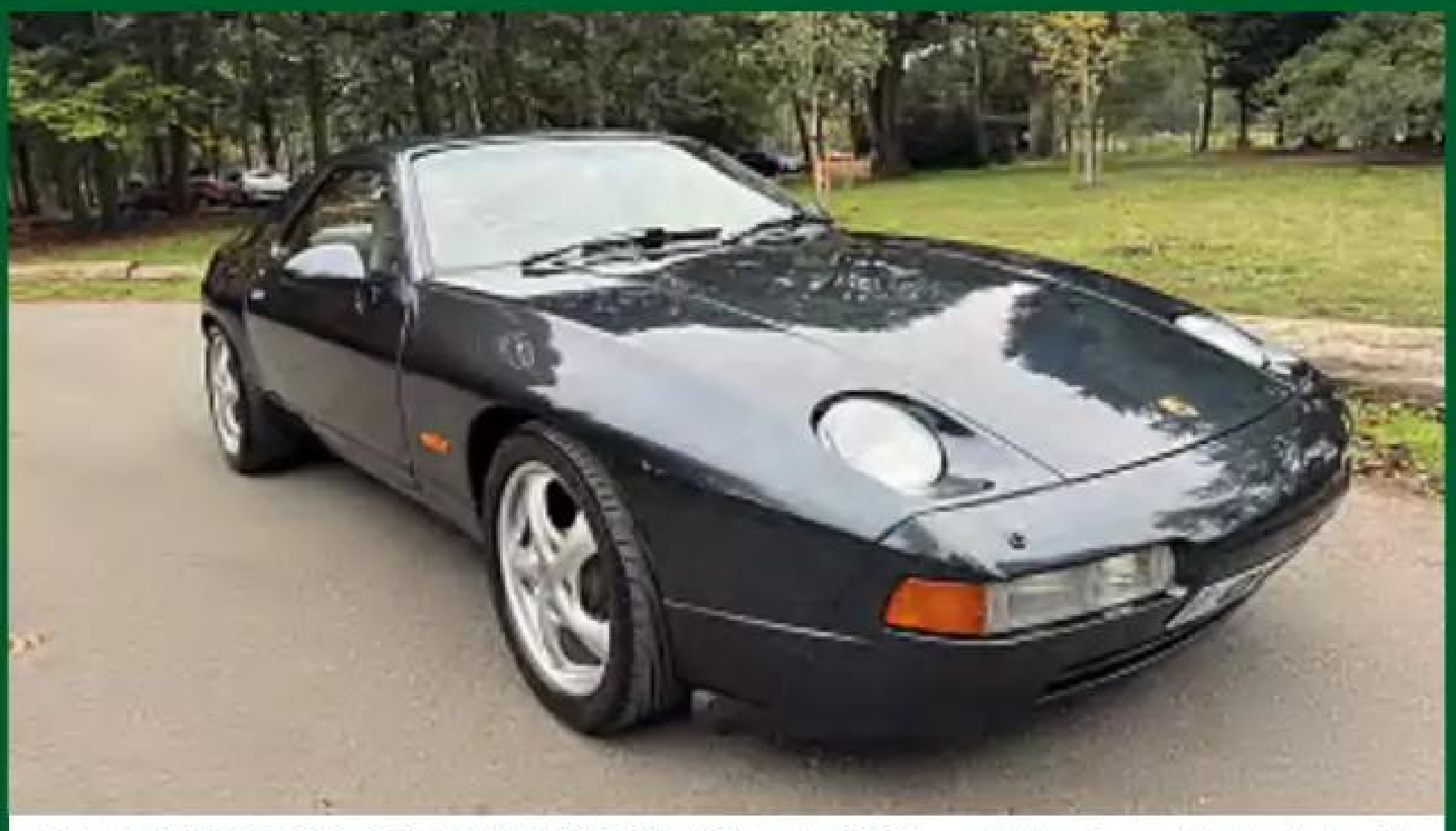
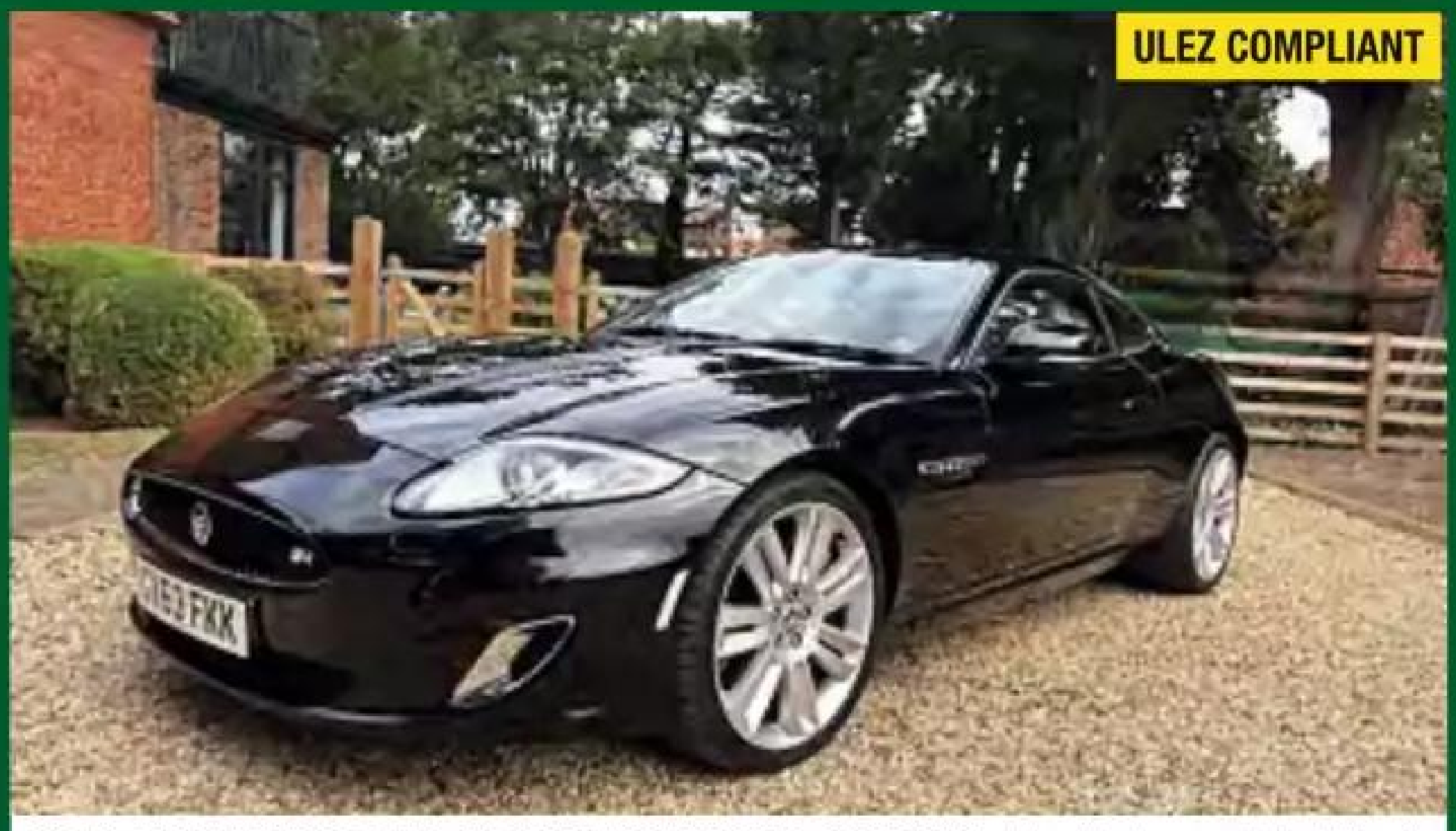


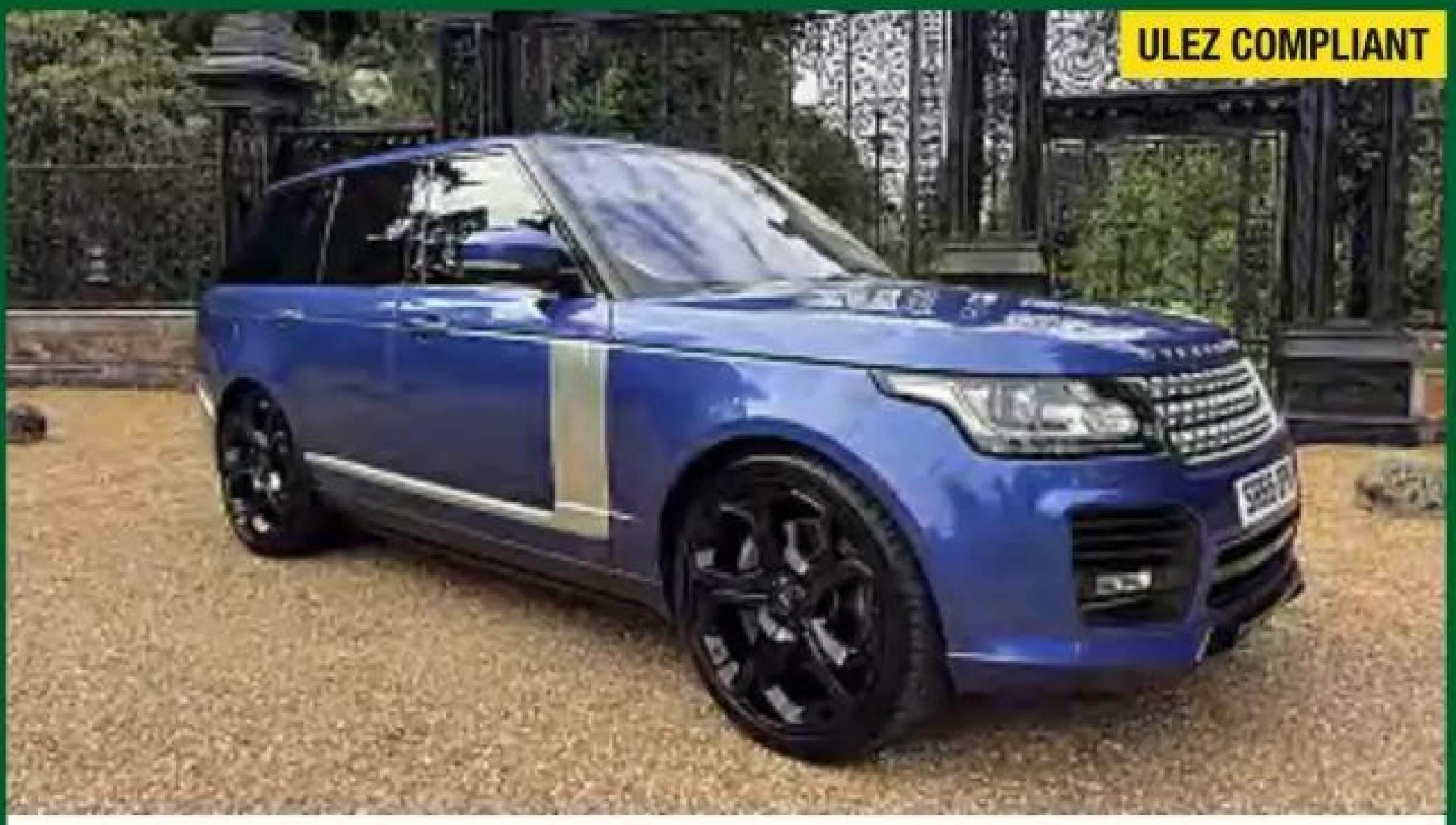
1995 PORSCHE CARRERA 4 911 (993) 6 SPEED MANUAL (LHD Supplied by Sonnen Porsche of San Francisco, original invoice is within the history file. Polaris Silver Metallic with Classic Grey leather seats, having benefited from California's dry climate the body and paintwork are in immaculate condition as is the interior commensurate with the low mileage of only 58,896 miles. Comes with a service book, owners manual, V5C document and print out of service, mileage and ownership history. This iconic example of Porsche's final version of the air cooled engine is widely regarded as the best generation of the 911 ever produced. **£64,995**



1995 PORSCHE 928 GTS VERY RARE 928 GTS only 2,904 worldwide. Finished in limited edition Aventurine Green with Pale Grey Leather and the very rare option of Walnut Veneers to the centre console and door cards. Only 3 owners from new. 18 main dealer stamps by JCT 600 Ltd and Porsche Aberdeen now covered only 83,700 miles. Specifications include electric sunroof, very expensive Alpine music system which includes 4 amp upgraded speakers and CD multichanger. Also included the very desirable and valuable registration of C1 GTS. With a complete documented main dealer service history, handbook, 2 sets of keys, complete tool kit etc. A very sought after last of the line Porsche 928 GTS. **£57,995**



2014 JAGUAR XK R 5.0 V8 SUPERCHARGED COUPE. Finished in immaculate Ultimate Black with Ivory Hide seats and Dark Mesh Aluminium Veneers, Black Leather Dash and centre console with Ivory stitching. Featuring a 5.0 litre Supercharged Dynamic R Engine. High spec with electric memory climate seats, heated and multifunctional steering wheel, cruise control, 7in LCD touch screen, rear view camera with front and rear parking sensors, dual zone front climate control and much more. Full main dealer service history. Only covered 19,400 miles.Exceptional example combining luxury with power...**£39,995**



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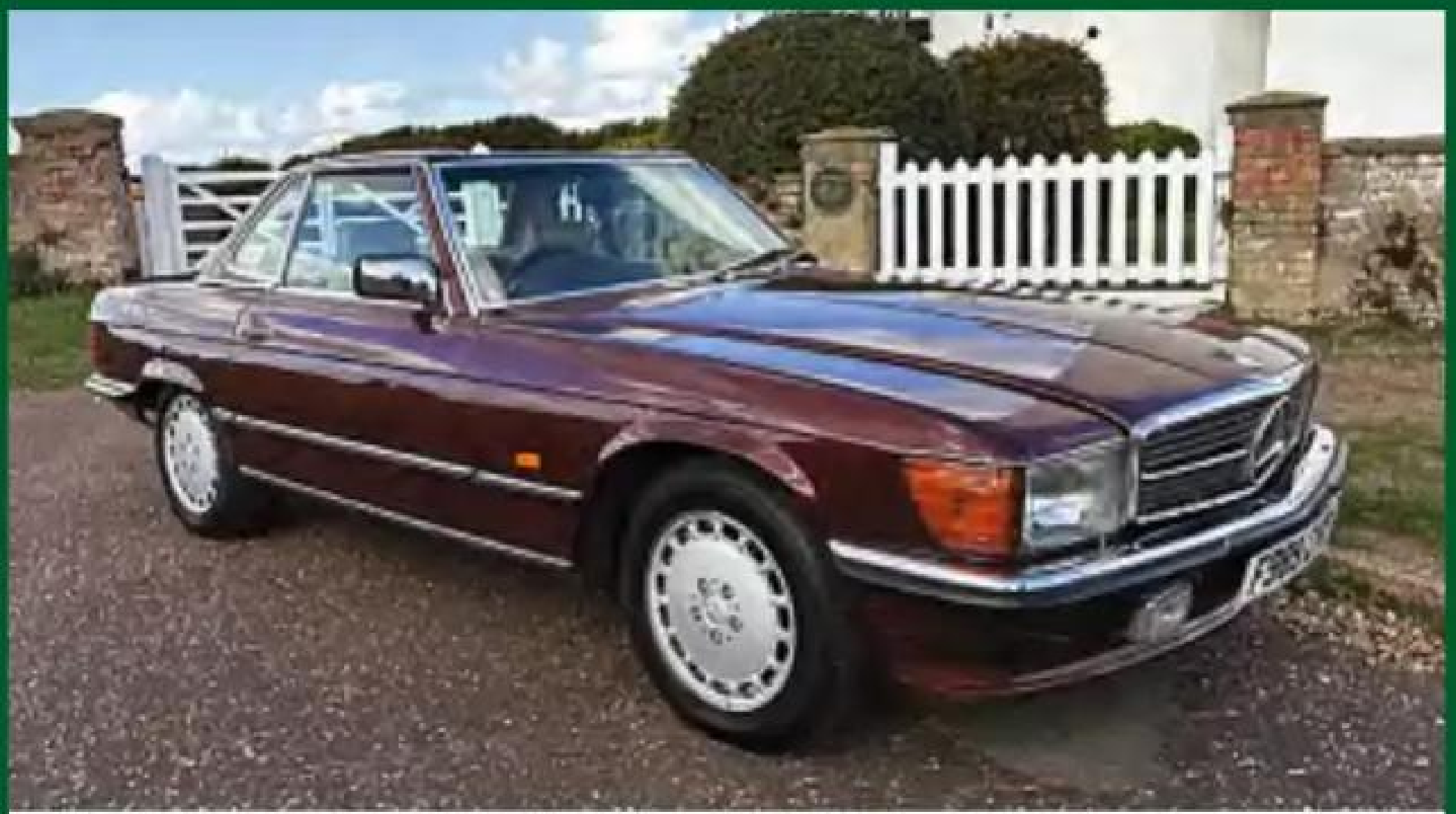
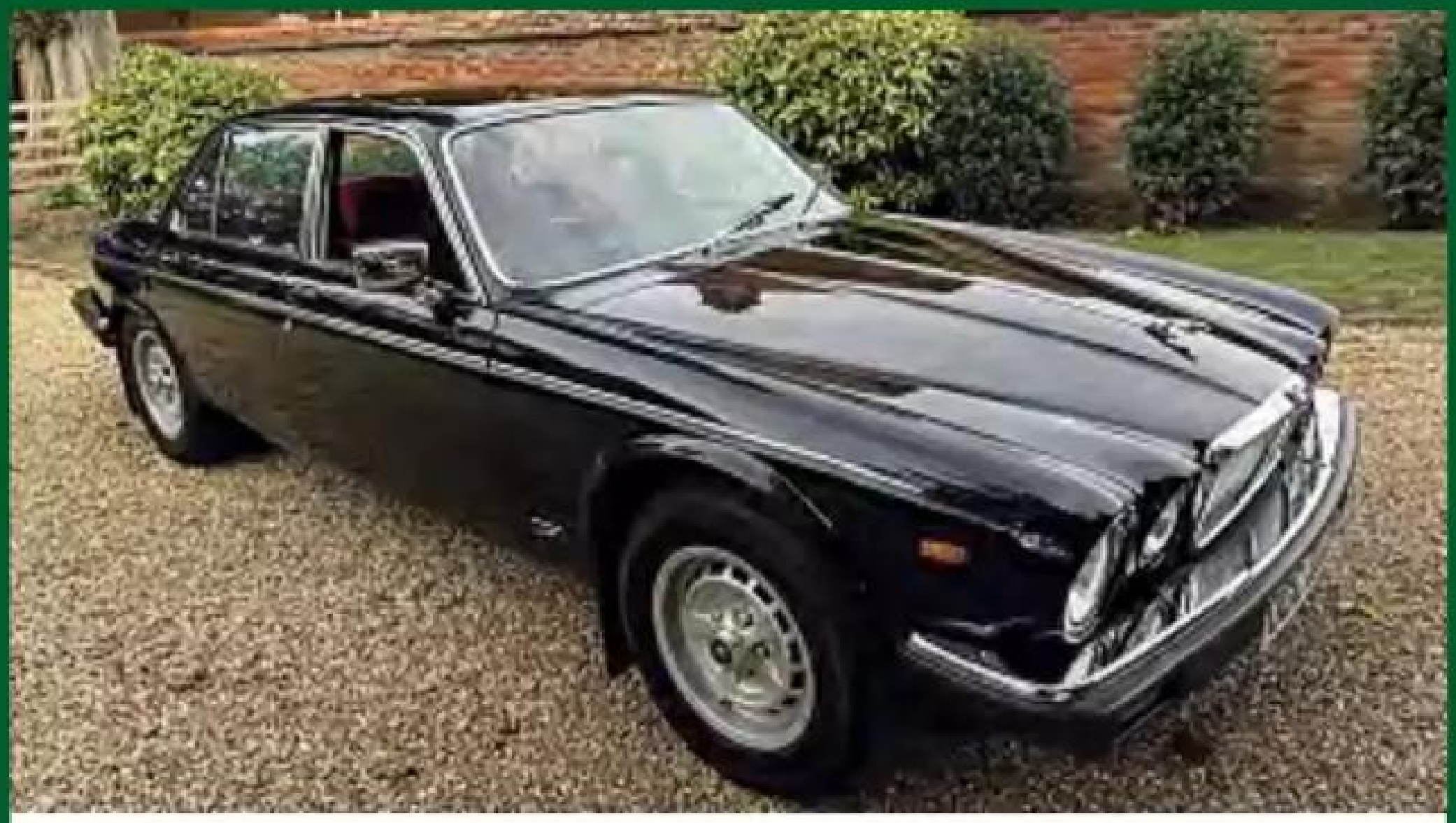
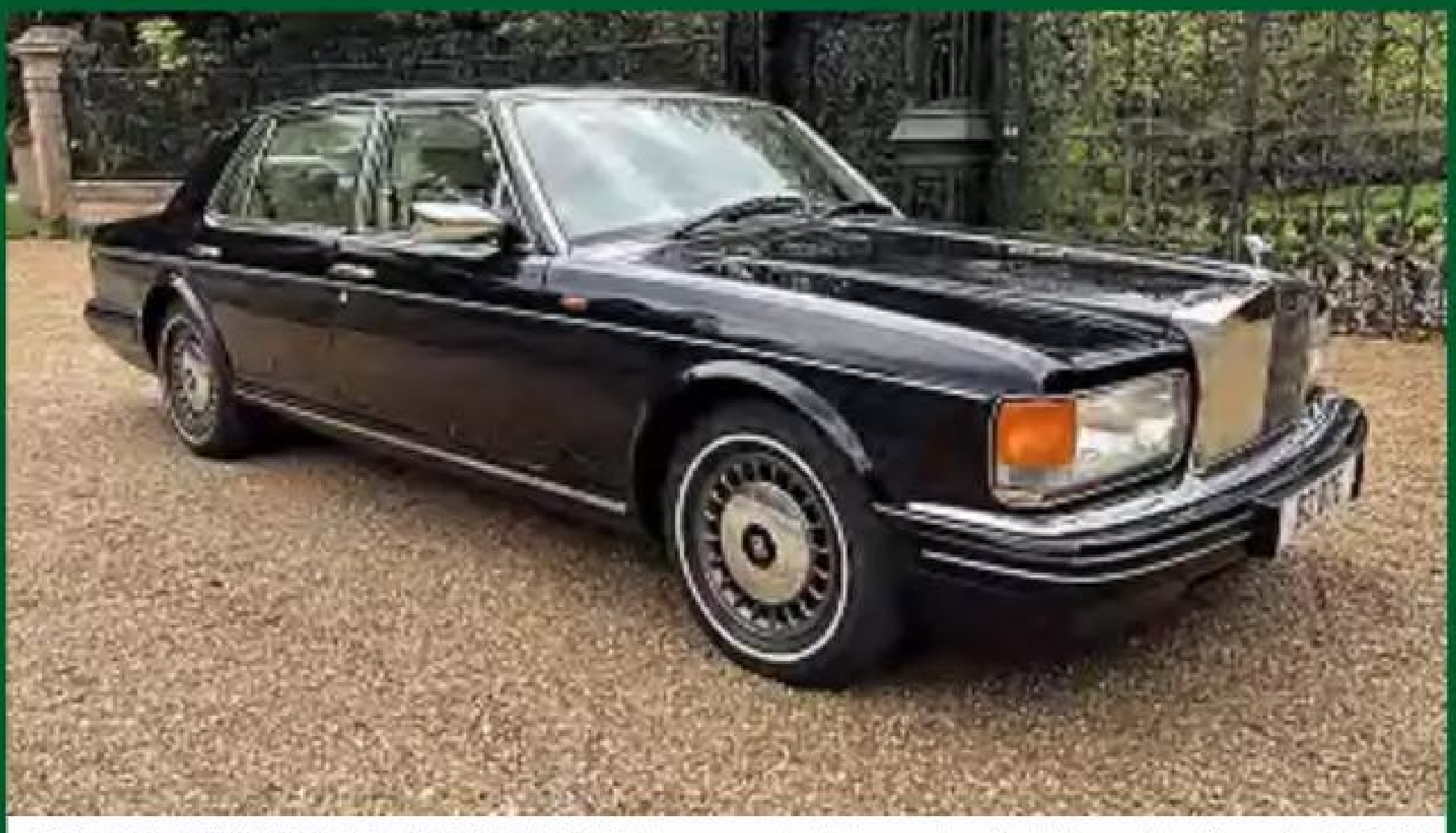


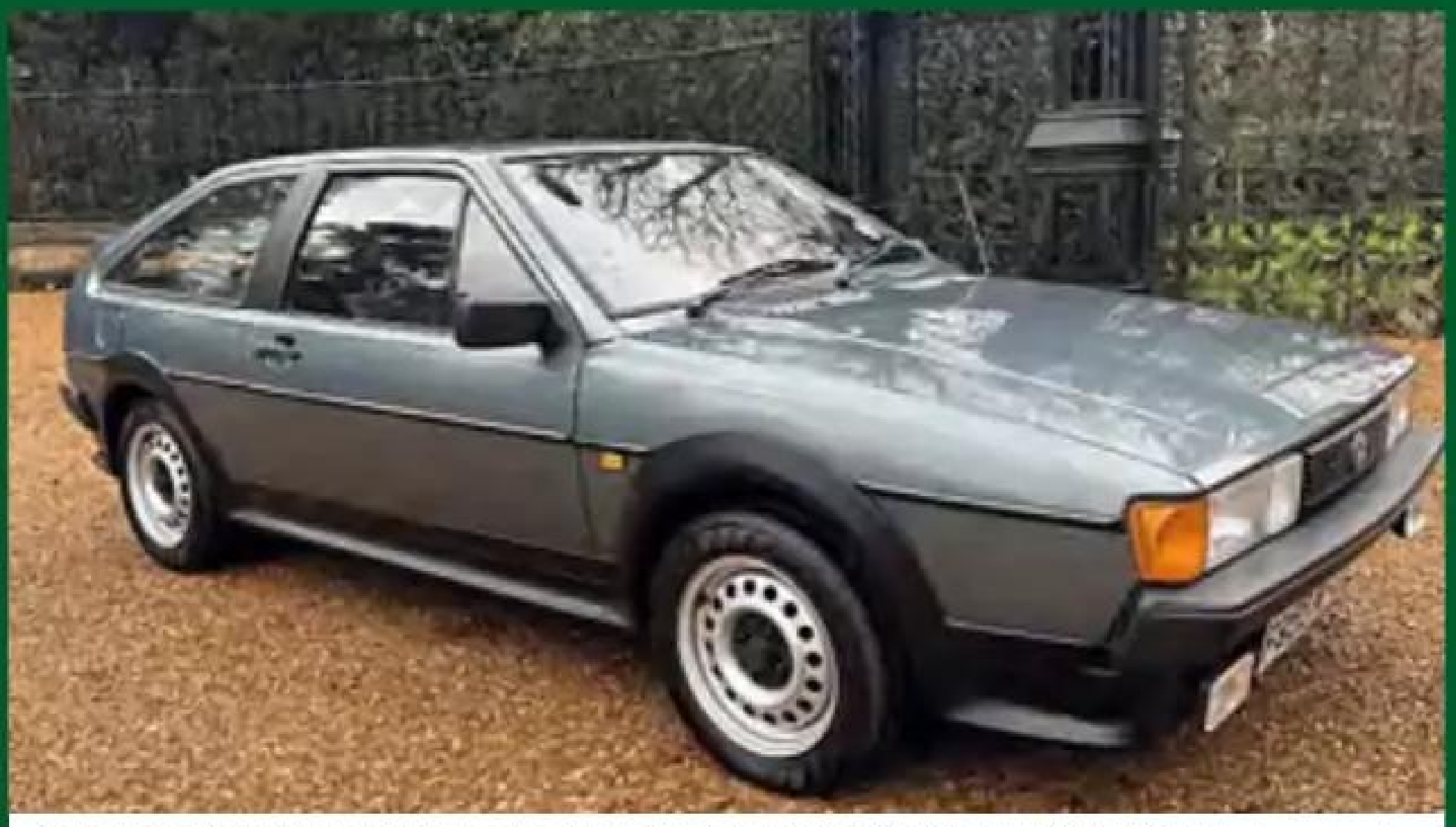
1988 MERCEDES-BENZ R107 500SL Finished in immaculate Pageant Red with Beige Hide. Sold by us to a local lady in 2008 and serviced and maintained by us and has covered only 10,000 in 17 years. Facelift model with the all Alloy Engine, 4 speed gearbox, ABS brakes and flat face alloy wheels. Specs also include electric windows, cruise control, radio cassette, headlamp wash/wipers and front fog lamps. Original book pack, fully stamped service book and file of invoices for service and maintenance keeping the car in the magnificent condition it is today.... **£27,995**



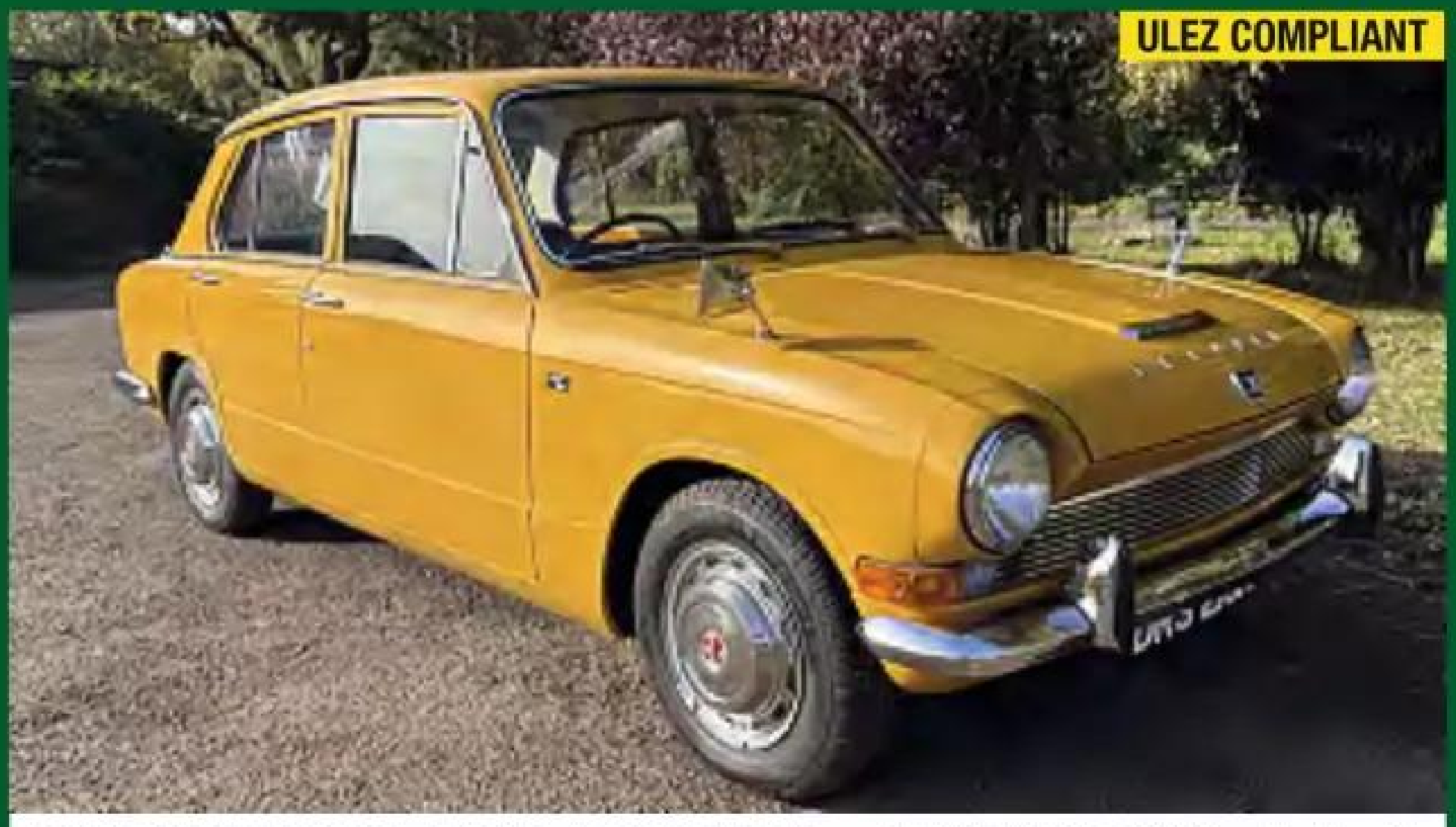
1981 JAGUAR XJ6 SERIES III 4.2 AUTO *ONLY 16,000 MILES* Pre-registered by main Jaguar Agents Arnold Wilson. Factory ordered to the specification of Gloss Black with Deep Red Velvet interior trim finished off with Daimler Style Chrome waistline mouldings, a centre bonnet moulding, complete with Jaguar mascot, Kent alloy wheels and Philips Radio Cassette player. Sold to its one and only keeper 4 weeks after registration who kept and cherished the car for 44 years and only covered 16,000 miles. Comes with its original wallet containing handbook, service book, super cover documents, old MOTs, 2 sets of keys plus AA key. Full Service, New MOT and 12 Months Warranty. Collectors Quality Car.. **£26,995**



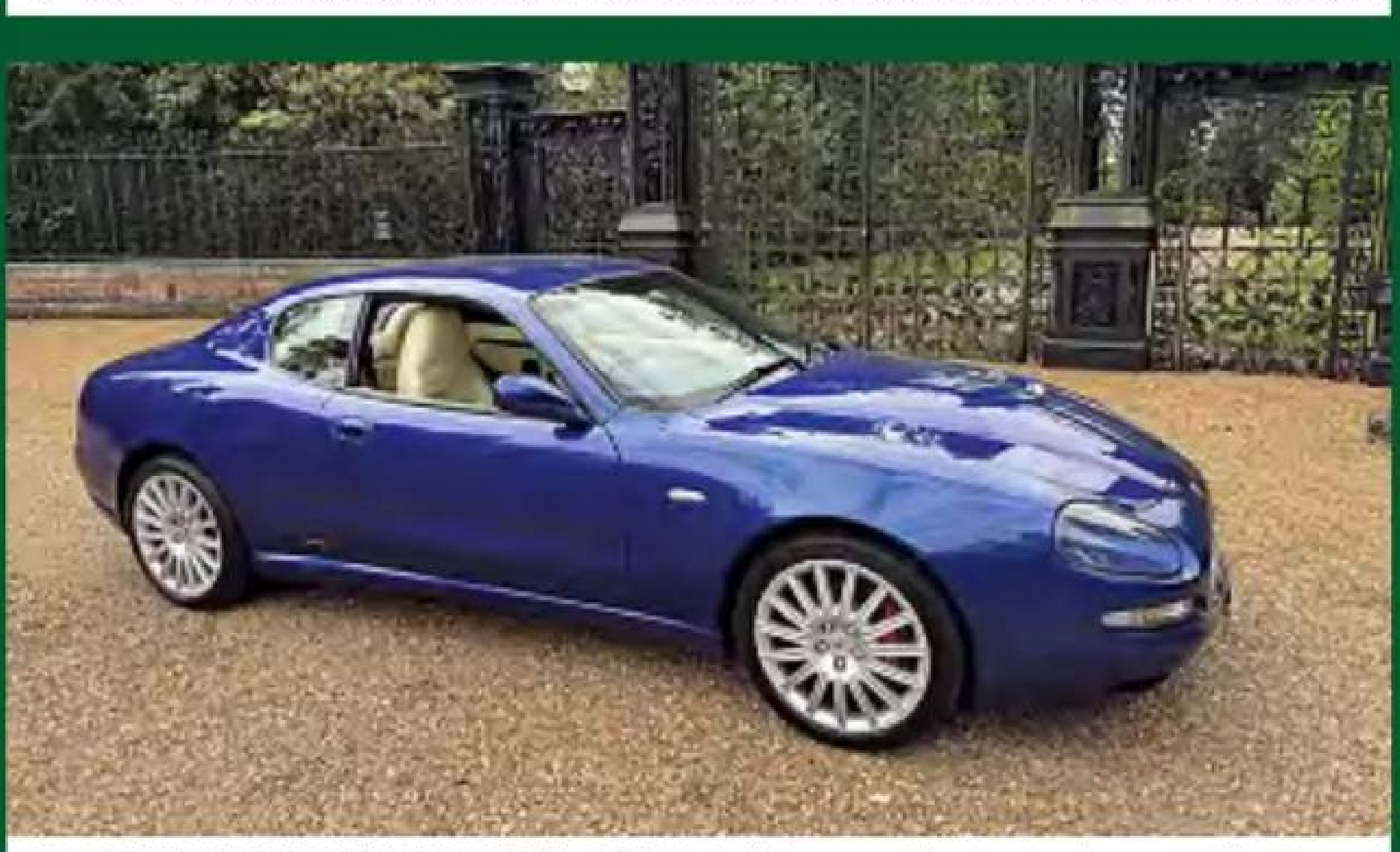
1997 ROLLS ROYCE SILVER DAWN LWB AUTO A rare opportunity to acquire a Rolls Royce Silver Dawn. Only 87 RHD out of a total production of 237 of these fabulous last of the line ZA service Rolls Royces were produced before the involvement of BMW etc. Finished in immaculate Midnight Blue with unmarked Parchment Hide piped in Royal Blue, dark Blue Lambswool rugs and walnut trim. Rolls Royce alloy wheels with white band tyres. Last owner for the past 10 years comes with a full service history. 9 main dealer stamps to 30,200 miles and 2 more service and invoices from Rolls Royce Specialists. Comes with original Silver Dawn Book Pack, Handbook, service book with 13 service stamps and a file of invoices and old MOTs. Also included is the registration plate of "B2 BTE". Excellent example of a very collectable Rolls Royce. **£26,995**



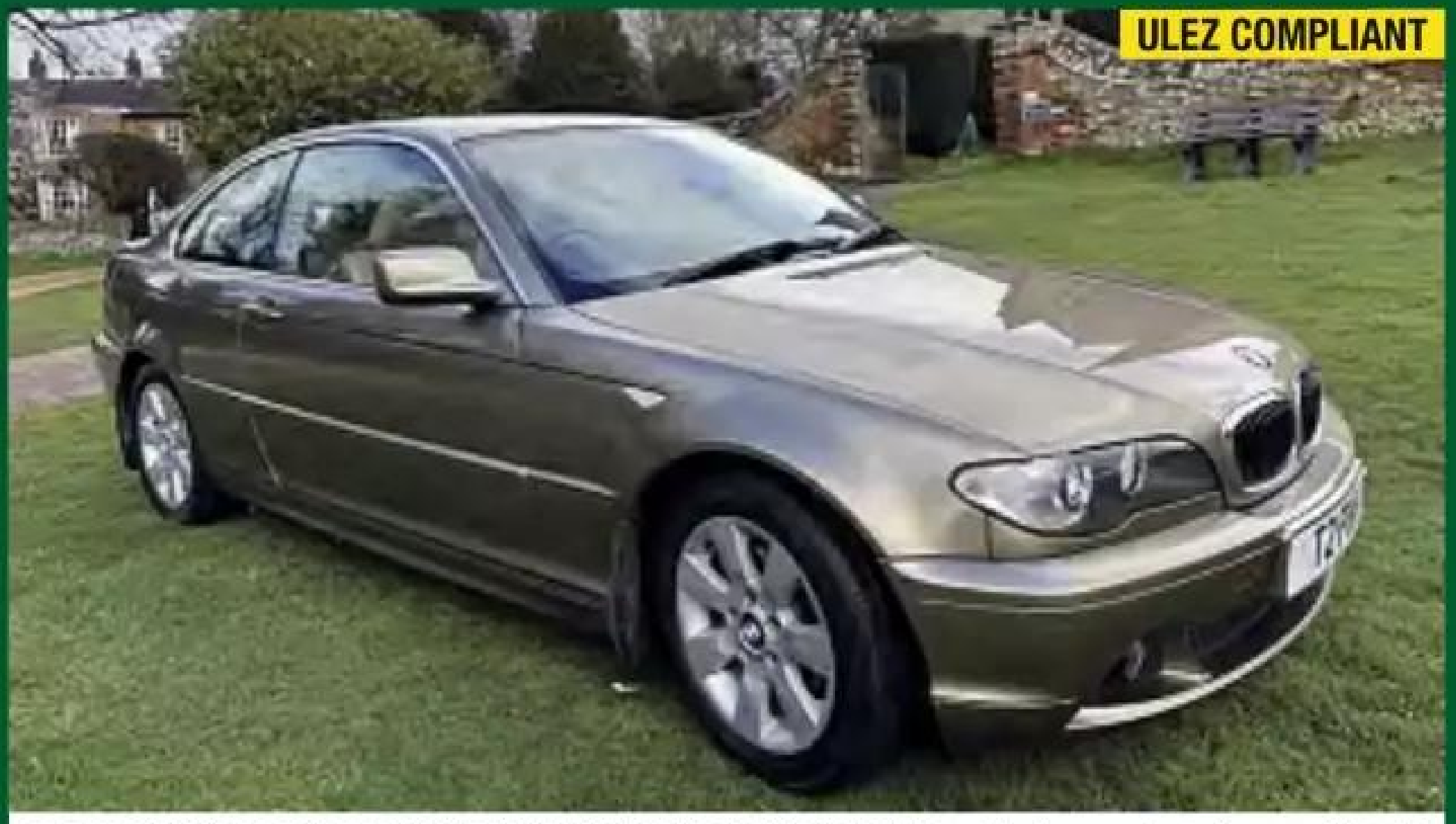
1989 VOLKSWAGEN SCIROCCO GT *ONE OWNER 19,000 MILES ONLY* This stunning 2nd generation 1.8 litre GT Coupe is finished in its original and immaculate Metallic Grey with Grey Trim. Registered on the 24th of April 1989, serviced by Volkswagen Main Dealers Colborne of Surrey and has only covered 19,000 miles. Owned by an elderly gentleman who covered just over 1000 miles in the past 19 years.Comes with original Scirocco instruction manual and dealer information in original wallet. Service invoices and service print out and 2 sets of keys. Totally original Scirocco in time warp condition....**£18,995**



1970 TRIUMPH 1300 TC *Only 48,000 MILES and TWO OWNERS* Supplied by B.L main agents W.F Parr and Sons to its first owner who kept the car until 2024 and serviced by them with the last service at 35,293 miles. In time warp conditions never had any welding, the interior completely original with the new car protection covers still on the door cars and the carpets still fresh. Refinished in its original Saffron Yellow with unmarked Black Trim. 35,342 TC models were produced and it is believed only 26 remain on the road today. This must be one of the best in existence, becoming very rare to find in this condition......**£17,995**



2002 MASERATI CAMBIOCORSA 4.2 Finished in one of the best colour combinations of blu mediterranean with crema hide. With the 4.2 Ferrari built 4.2 V8 engine. Specs include climate control, electric heated seats, electric windows and maserati media system. Only 54,000 miles from new with full maserati history mainly by maranello and comes with fully stamped service history backed up with a large file of invoices and old mots original manuals and tool kit. Exceptional value italian supercar for only **£17,995**



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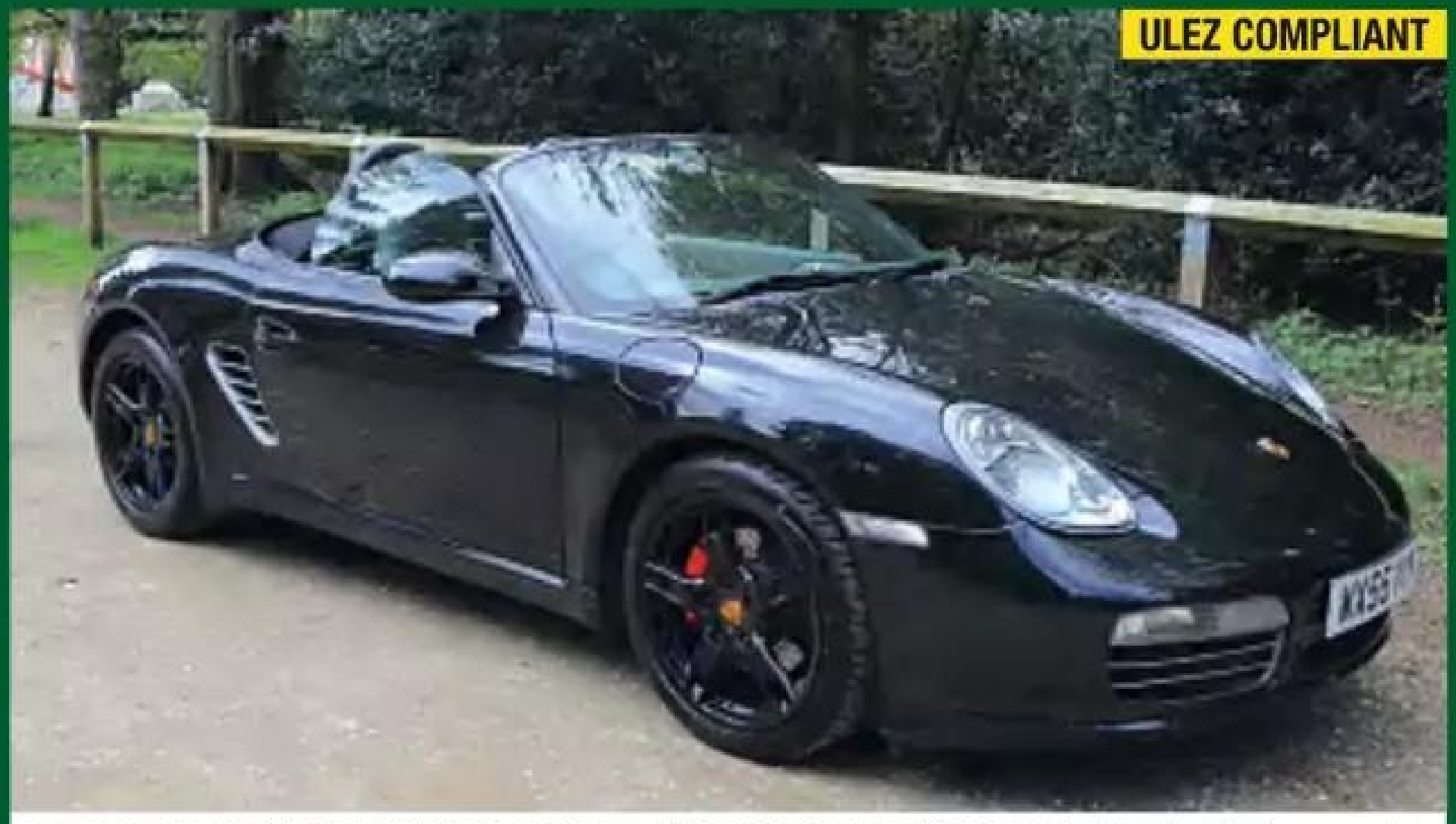

2005 PORSCHE BOXSTER 3.2 S (6 SPEED MANUAL GEARBOX). Finished in immaculate Basalt Black with dark grey hide, dark grey carpet and electric powered black hood. Only 68,000 miles with full service history, both main dealer and specialist stamps. Specifications include electric seats and windows, original Porsche CDR 24 sound system, digital climate control, trip computer etc. Styled with an automatically extending rear boot spoiler, red painted brake calipers with black alloys and coloured Porsche crests. Comes with a file of invoices detailing how well the car has been cared for along with its original books in the leather Porsche wallet....**£11,995**

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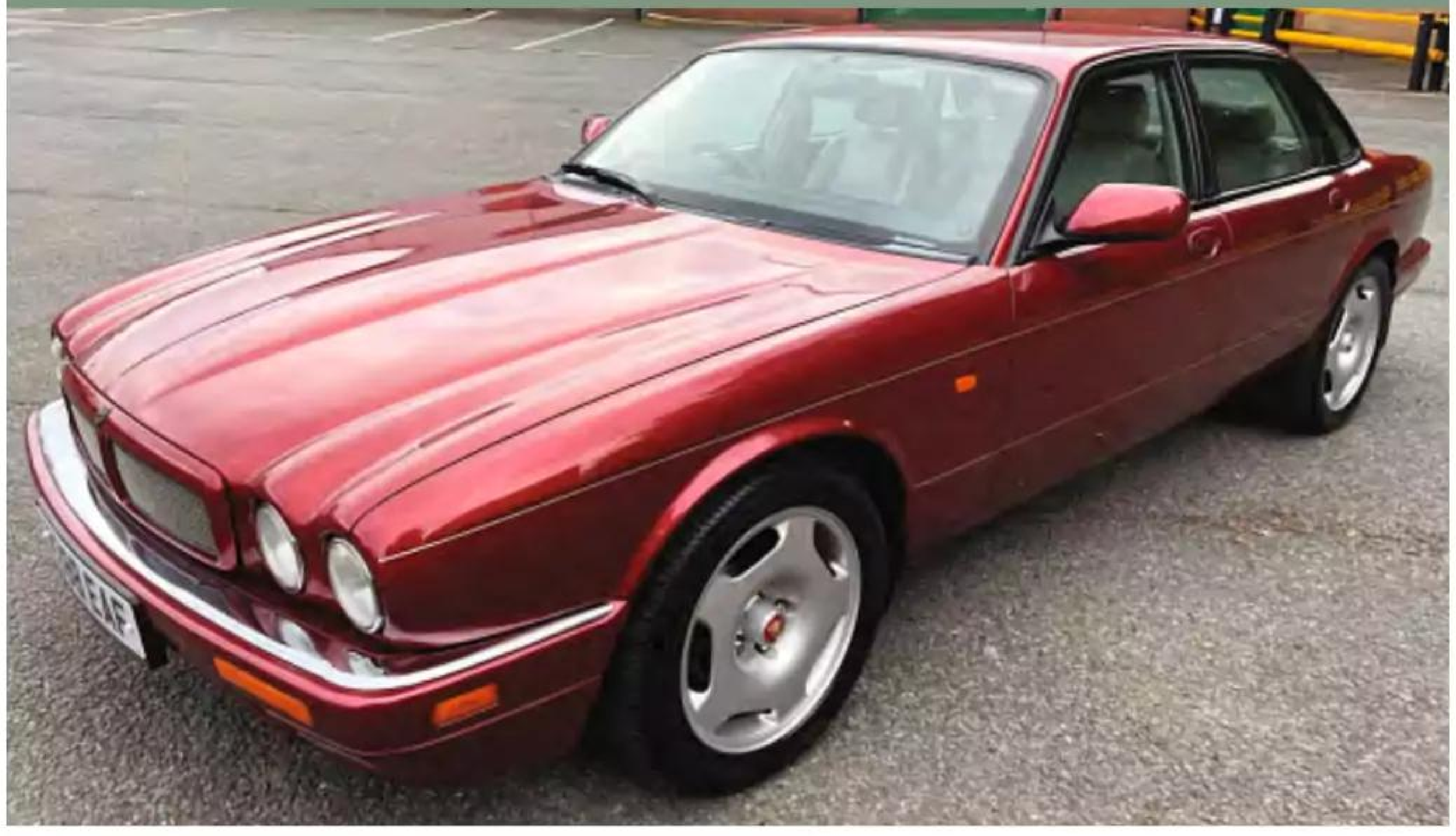
Classified pick

Our favourite cars you can buy this month



JAGUAR XJR

Year of manufacture 1995 **Recorded mileage** 158,000
Asking price £19,950 **Vendor** The School Garage, Whaley Bridge, Derbyshire; 01663 733209; classiccarshop.co.uk
WHEN IT WAS NEW
Price £45,450 **Max power** 321bhp **Max torque** 378lb ft
0-60mph 5.7 secs **Top speed** 153mph **Mpg** 16.2

What on earth am I doing picking out an X300 XJR with 158,000 miles, let alone one priced just under £20,000? Well, it's all about the gearbox – this is one of only 268 built with a manual, 102 of which were UK right-hookers.

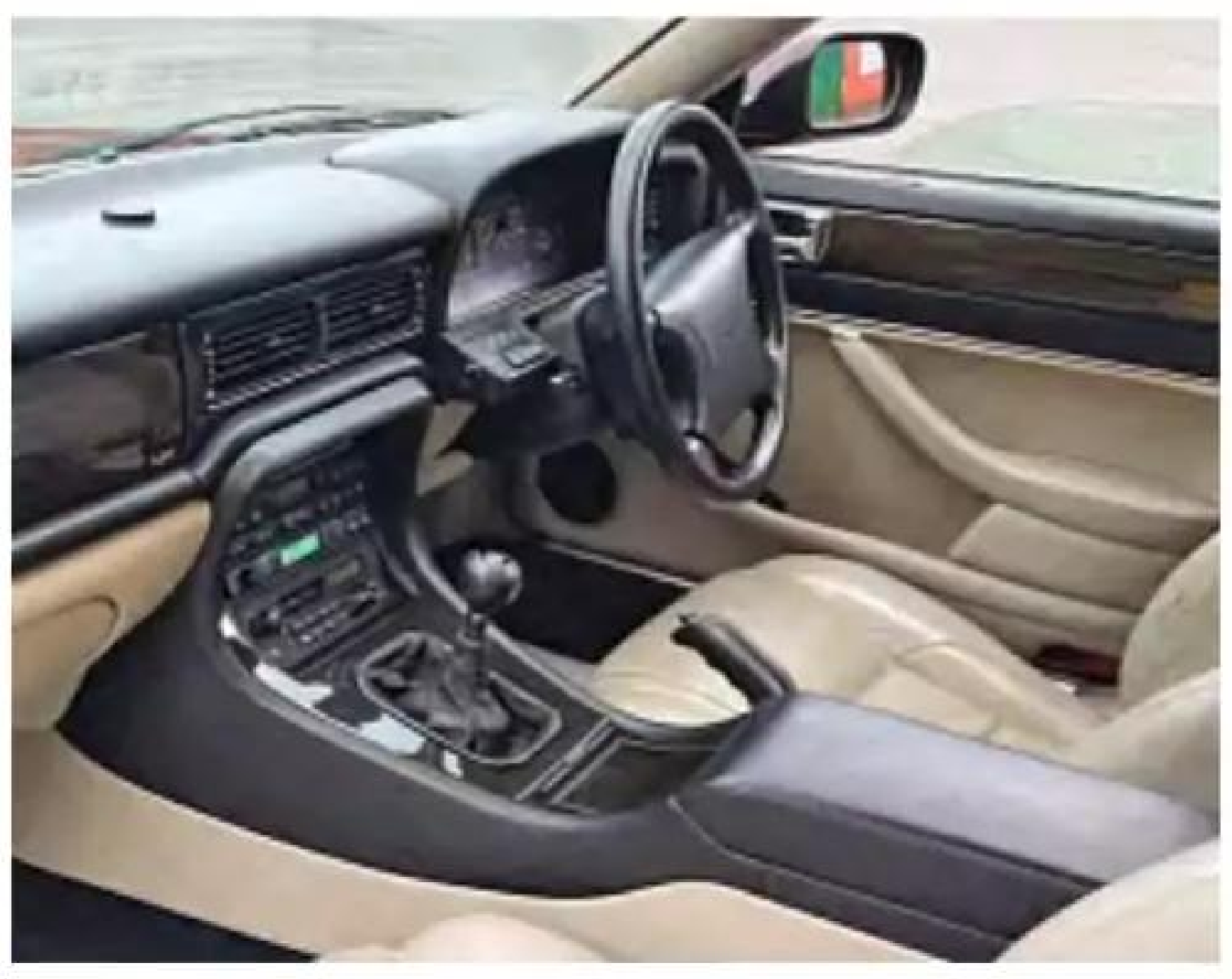
Stick-shift was actually standard on the X300-generation XJR, but almost all buyers stumped up the extra £1500 for an auto 'box. "For good reason," I hear many readers reply, but while I completely get that argument for a new XJR to use every day in 1995, it's not the same equation today. The market clearly agrees, with manual XJRs worth roughly twice as much as autos.

The Getrag 290 five-speed is not the best-shifting transmission ever, but it's still much more engaging than a four-speed GM slushbox. That auto, whether in XJRs or XJ6s, hampered the brilliant Jaguar engines of this era – even the V12s – into feeling barely more urgent than a modern four-cylinder turbodiesel, at least until they really got into their stride at close-to-illegal speeds. Not so when you have direct control of the engine and its revs. The manual transmission knocks a second off the 0-60mph time and, crucially, most of that difference will be felt in immediate, off-the-mark response.

Clearly, previous owners have enjoyed the experience in this example, because they have racked up 158,000 miles in the Jaguar – and heaped maintenance on it in the process. The cliché that the car doesn't look half its miles is almost true here. Its driver's seat, showing cracks and splits on the oatmeal leather bolsters, does reveal wear, but that's all. It's otherwise a fantastically clean-looking car for any mileage, boasting a bulging service book filled with main-dealer receipts. It's had an owner who has loved driving it, and has loved the car enough not to skimp on its maintenance.

Still, a mileage such as that means this car is never going to be a collector's choice – but if you're buying a manual XJR, you're looking for something to drive, anyway. These last-of-the-line AJ6s are tough units, too, as long as the timing chain is still tight; the weakness of the X300 is rust and, on that front, every surface of this example appears reassuringly show-car clean.

As the only XJR (and the final XJ, for that matter) to offer a manual 'box, this is a rare British bruiser and an alternative to the more obvious answer of an E34 M5. It may look expensive compared to a regular automatic XJR of its era, but compare it to the BMW and suddenly you've got yourself a bargain.



SUMMARY

CHOSEN BY Charlie Calderwood
FOR Rare, sporty manual 'box; epic maintenance records
AGAINST High mileage; rarity brings added expense
WHY SHOULD I BUY IT? If you want an XJR in which you can row your own gears and aren't precious about mileage

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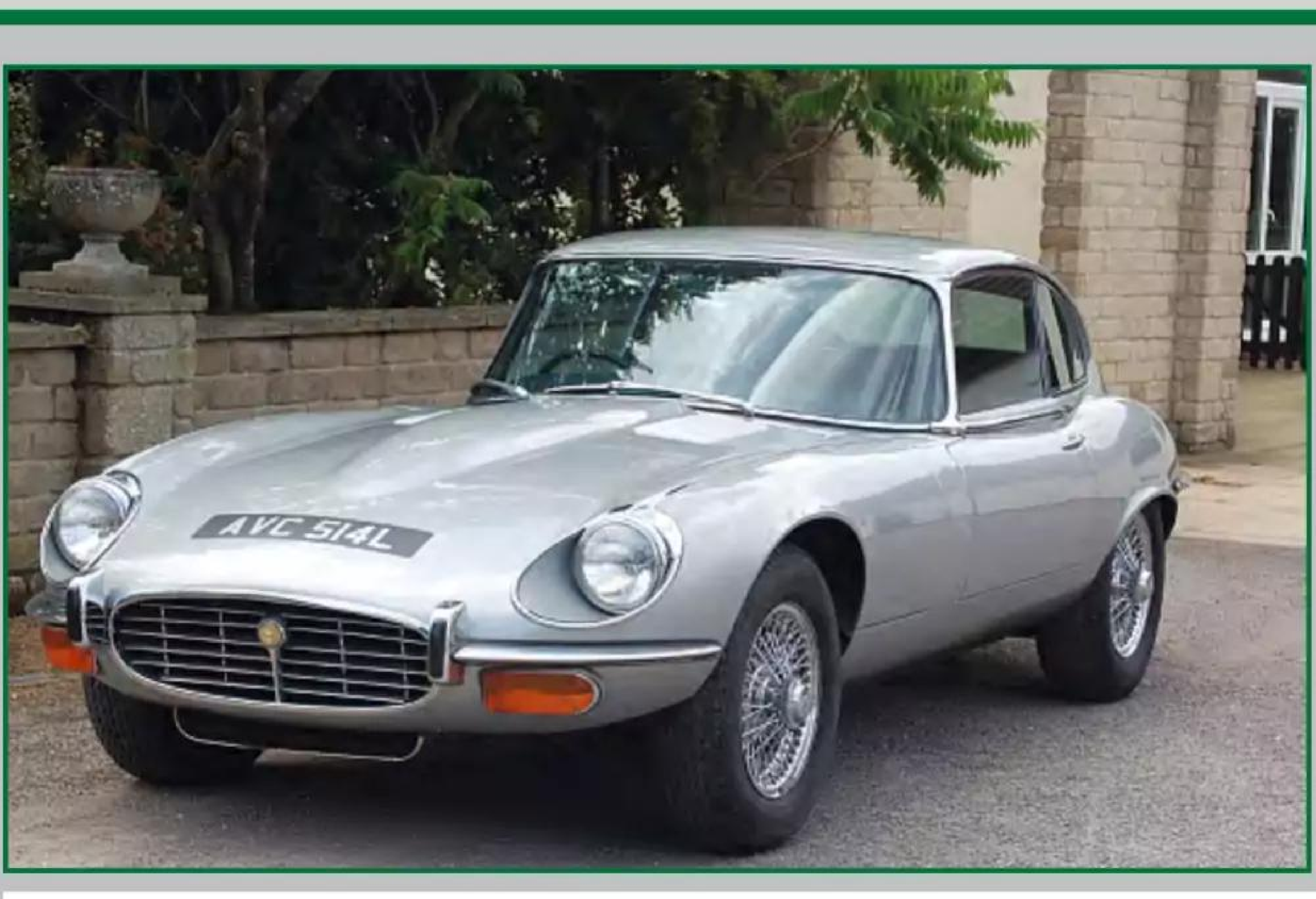

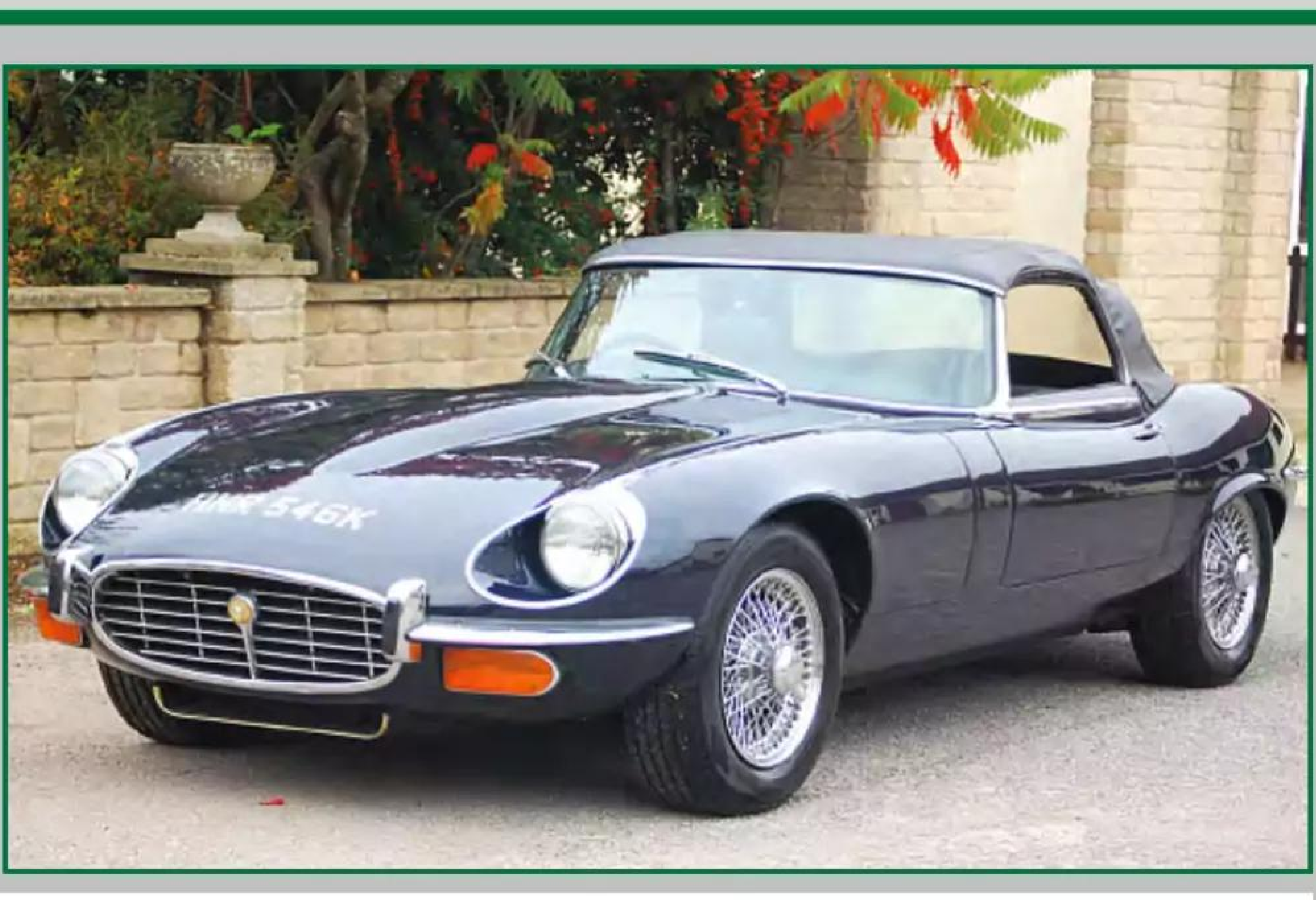

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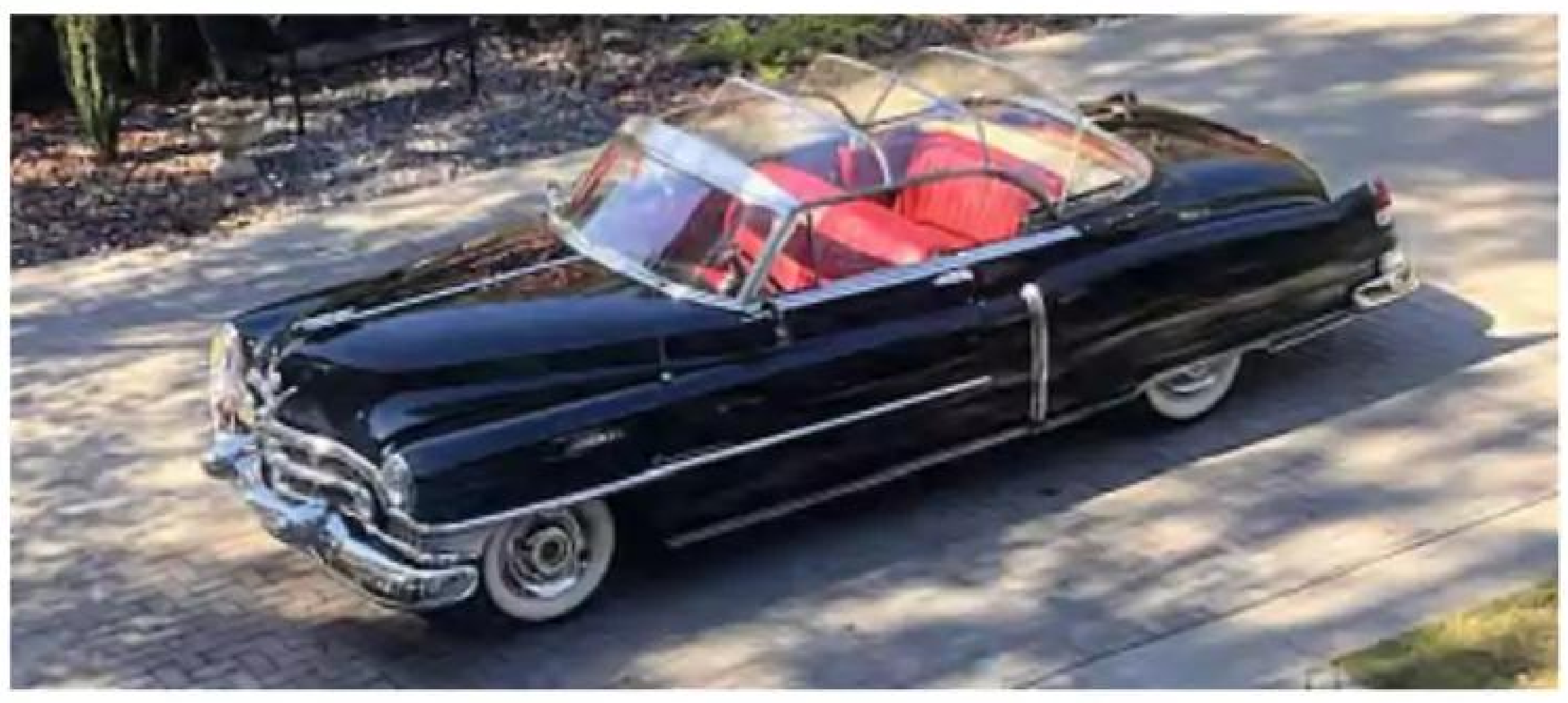

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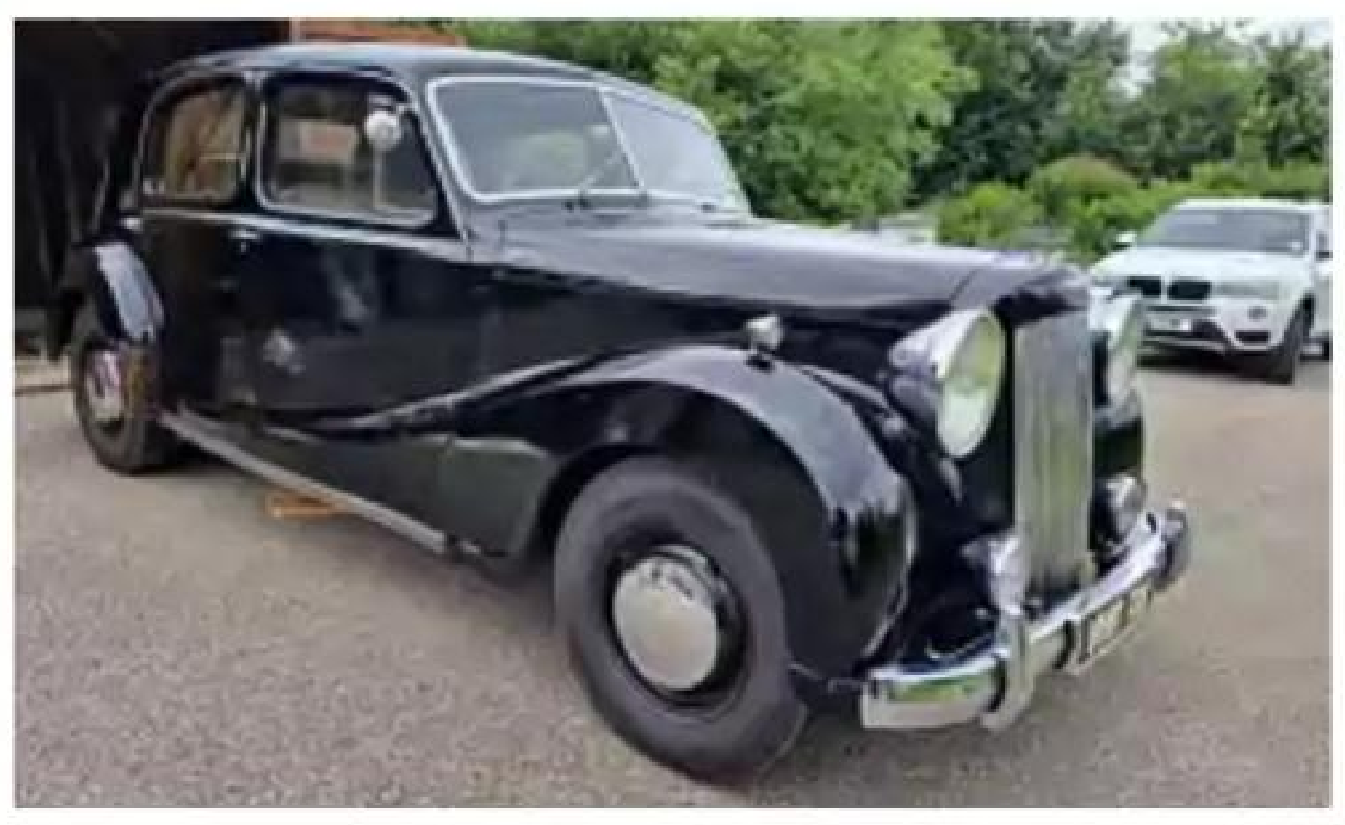

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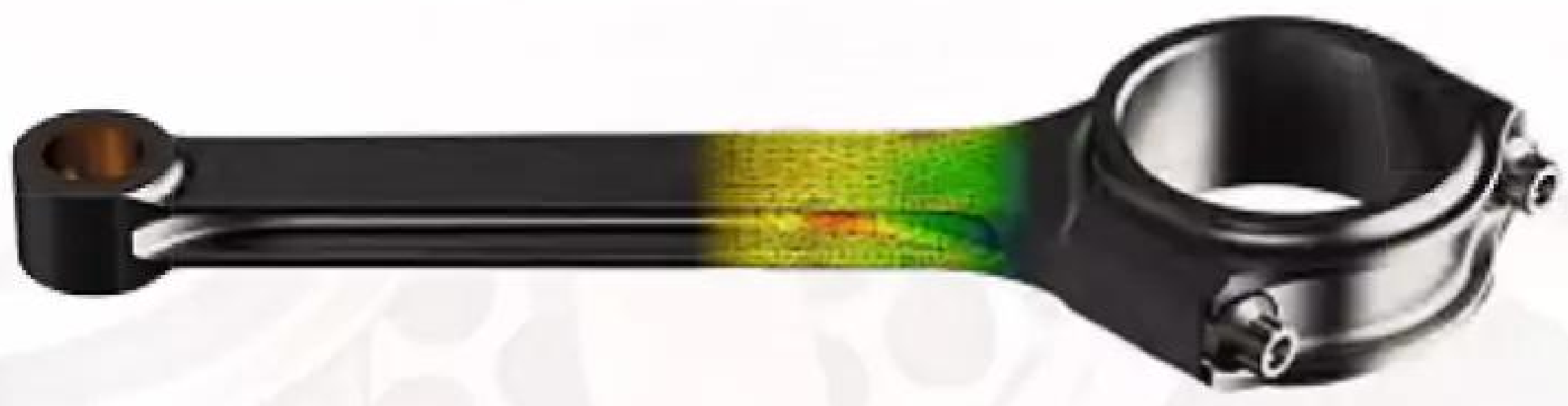

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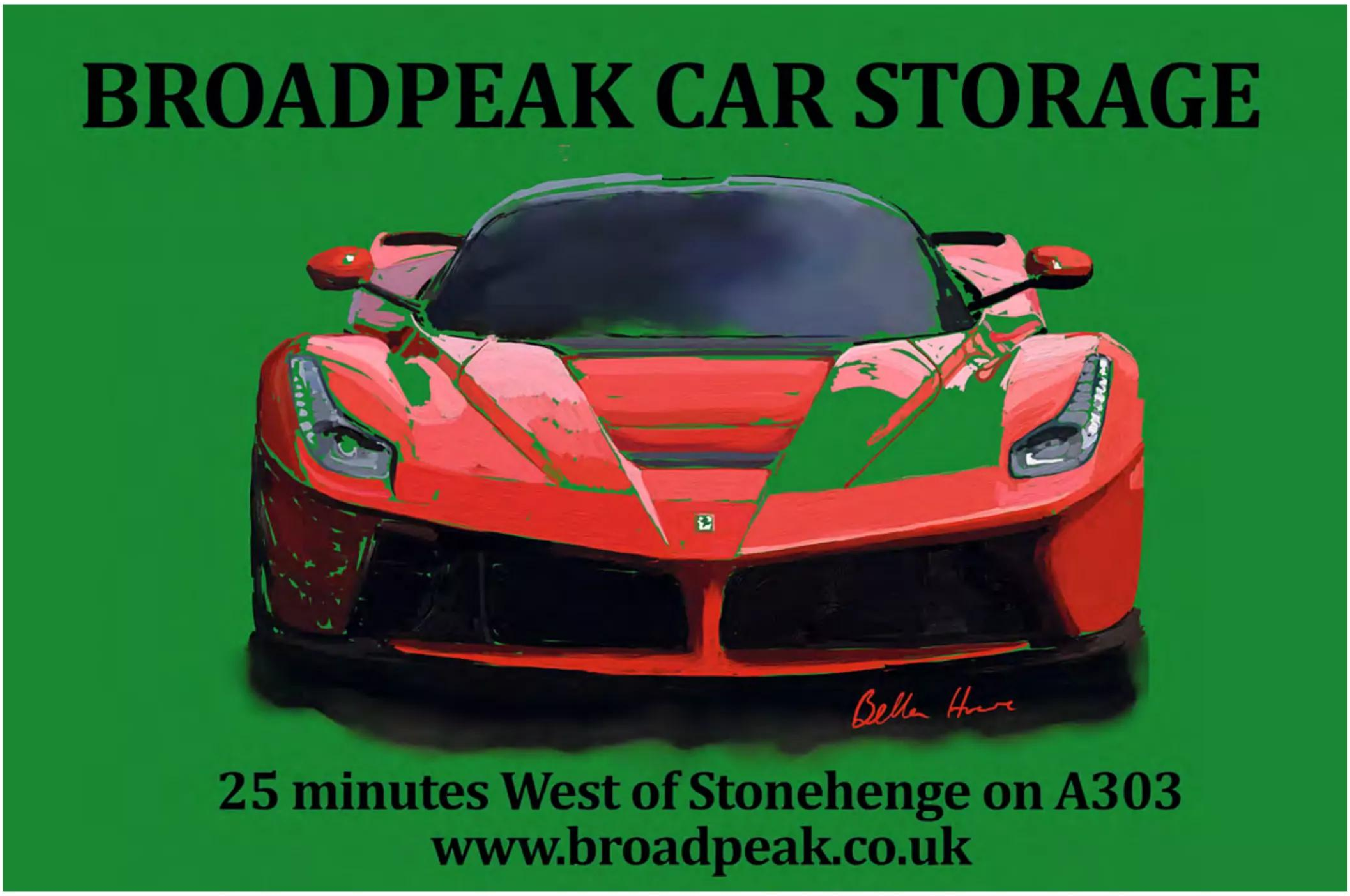
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The Chapman sunglasses collection houses two models; The Chapman Innovator and The Chapman Victory.

The Chapman Innovator features an authenticated part of a button from Colin's trademark hat, embedded within the Renauld Keepsake Marque, set within the temple of the sunglasses. The hat rests in the Chapman Family archive curated by Clive Chapman, Colin's son, who remains deeply committed to preserving and celebrating the history of Team Lotus. The Chapman Victory is presented as seen on Chapman, without a Keepsake.

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FACTFILE
Engine 2480cc turbo 'five'; 394bhp @ 5600-7000rpm; 369lb ft @ 2250-5600rpm **Transmission** seven-speed auto, 4WD **0-62mph** 3.8 secs
Top speed 174mph **Mpg** 30.7
Price £71,925 (as tested)

AUDI RS3

Ingolstadt mates its Dr Jekyll grip and practicality with Mr Hyde performance

WORDS **RYAN STANDEN** PHOTOGRAPHY **MAX EDLESTON**

FUTURE CLASSIC

Nobody does a five-cylinder quite like Audi. Or should that be nobody *did* a five-cylinder quite like Audi? Fiat, Mercedes-Benz, Alfa Romeo and others have dabbled, and Volvo was a past master, but now Ingolstadt is the keeper of the flame. The RS3 is the sole model in its line-up fitted with this turbocharged 2480cc cracker, and that's worth celebrating.

Why do fans of internal combustion get fired up about a 'five'? Well, the offbeat configuration provides smoother delivery and more power than a 'four', but it's more compact than a 'six', with a power stroke occurring at 144° intervals on the crankshaft. Or, if you're not technically inclined, the long and short of it is that the 1-2-4-5-3 firing order makes a terrific noise.

The latest RS3's motor doesn't share any parts with the original quattro's famous 'five', but there is still a ring of late-night rally stage to the way it snorts and snarls. The 2.5-litre TFSI has 394bhp and 369lb ft, with the latter delivered from 2250-5600rpm, but it pays to hang on until the 7000rpm redline to hear its hard-edged yowl. It doesn't sound turbocharged, but the single blower makes sure you don't forget it's there: the punch above 3000rpm is mighty. Before you know it, the shift light on the head-up display flicks to red and it's time to do it all again. There are seven gears in the dual-clutch 'box, but you'd need a circuit to explore anything beyond third. The RS3 is the baby in the range, but it's still properly quick: 0-62mph in 3.8 secs trumps a 2008 Audi R8 by 0.8 secs, and if you tick the £8805 Carbon Vorsprung option (as here), it will charge on to 174mph.

But don't think this is a one-dimensional tool that's only good for straight-line thrills. The Audi yanks itself into apices and scampers out of them with extraordinary poise, but you never feel far removed from the action – with the clever torque splitter between the rear wheels flattering your driving. The RS3 will gobble up most cars in its path, and that gaping grille says as much. Alternatively, leave it in Comfort mode and you can feel like a pound-shop Mikkola or Mouton, watching the nose bob skywards when you accelerate and dive back down when you jump on the brakes.

Audi has remained coy about how long this unit will remain in production, but don't grieve just yet. For now, you can still buy an Audi with a turbo 'five' and four-wheel drive, and there are good times ahead: rumours are that the 2.5 TFSI will power a 25th-anniversary Golf R in 2027. As for the RS3, it's much more than just a homage to the marque's five-cylinder legacy: it's a sports-car slayer that has evolved into a captivating driver's car. Hopefully it won't be the last with a 1-2-4-5-3 heartbeat.

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